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Drx

Joliffe, John

CHATTANOOGA.

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O, wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us,
To see ousels as ither see us!
It wad fra monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion,
What airs in dress an' gait wad lie a' us,
And e'en Devotion!—*Burns.*

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1893

CHATTANOOGA.

CHAPTER I.

"AND you think there is no one in this neighborhood who can tell me any thing more about this matter."

"Not a single soul, as I knows of. I am a stranger here myself, now; the old settlers are nearly all gone away. Some are dead, and others have moved off; I've been in these parts more nor a week, and have not seen a single soul yet, as was here when I lived hereabouts. They are all gone; I'm a stranger in the very place where I lived the longest."

The persons who were conversing, were a young man, who had the keen, inquisitive look of a Yankee book pedlar; and a large man, six feet high, whose head, and shoulders were a little bent with age; with stiff, white hair; white and bushy eye brows, and large, blue eyes. He was dressed in a brown, linsey hunting shirt, fastened tightly by a belt of black leather—in which was placed a large butcher knife—around his waist. He had a tame badger, which he was showing for five cents a sight. The badger lay quietly at his feet. It had a collar around its neck, made, probably, from the red top of an old boot, and from that a light iron chain extended, by which its owner held it.

They were seated on a bench at the front door of a tavern; a one story log house, with a porch on the east side extending the whole length of the house, in East Tennessee, near Chattanooga, and six or seven miles west of the Cumberland Mountains.

"Stranger, they are all gone; and a mighty clever set of people they were, too, when I lived hereabouts. There were no Railroad here then. The folks were old fashioned, clever, sociable people, who would shake hands and drink with a poor man as quick as a rich one. Them was good times, stranger; every body minded his own business, and let every body else mind his."

"Stranger, times is altered hereabouts since I was young. I live on White River, in Arkansas, and I thought I would walk back and see how things look hereabouts, and find some old friends, and so I brought this here varmint along to pay expenses; but I've bin here more nor a week, and have not seen a single soul yet as I knew when I were a young man."

"What might your name be, stranger?"

"My name is Hezekiah Strong."

"Whar might you live, stranger?"

"I live in Connecticut."

"Ah! that's a great way off, I dare say."

"Pedling dry goods, hey?"

"No, sir."

"Scourin' the country for money for people in Philadelphia, who has sold goods to the merchants hereabouts, stranger?"

"No, sir."

"Jist a travelin' for pleasure, then, stranger; may be you're rich, and can afford it?"

"No, sir; I came here to hunt up all the facts about the matter we have just been talking of. I wish to get them all together, and make a book of them. It may be that some people will like to read it."

"Make a book! stranger," said the old man, taking off his hat, and jerking the chain by which he held the badger; "Maken a book, stranger. Well, I've read some books in my life time, but never in all my days saw a man as could make one."

"I had a book 'onst—the life of Marion; he *was* a hero, I tell you; but I lent it and lent it till at last it got lost, and I am mighty sorry for it."

"Well, stranger, if you 'll put in your book what I've told you, jest as I told it, you may rely on it, for I've seen it nearly all myself; and you may ask any man that knows Tom Giles, and he will tell you that his word is true as preachin'."

"Did you ever hear of me before?"

"Yes."

"Whar, and who told you?"

"I have been collecting the facts relating to this matter for two years past, and to do so, I have been with the Indians west of the Mississippi, and with a great many other people. I have traveled a great many miles on this errand, and your name has some times occurred in the course of my researches."

"Well, stranger, I reckon you never heard any thing agin the old man, did you?"

"I never have heard any thing against your character for truth."

"Give us your hand, stranger," said the old man rising and seizing his hand. "You're a man arter my

own heart; indeed you are, that's a fact. Tom Giles is no liar.

"Stranger. All men have their faults, you know; but it's not my fault to be a liar. I despise a liar as I do a thief.

"Well, stranger, I wish you good luck in your book makin'; indeed I do. It will be a mighty purty book, too, if you put it all down in print jist as it was, you know. I tell you them was stirring times, and that Grey Eagle was a great fellow, and the rest of them people was a brave set. Thar's no such folks now a-days; the old ones have nearly all died off or moved away, and these youngsters, that's hereabouts now, aint much; they aint used to hardships like the old settlers.

"Well, stranger, if you can't find any person here abouts, who can tell you more of this thing, what will you do? Will you gin it up as a bad job?"

"Oh, no! I have enough now to make out a full history of the matter. I wish to visit the Cave itself, and see the other places where these things occurred, that I may describe them with accuracy."

"Well, as to that, I am afear'd you'll be dissapointed, because you see that cave is haunted now, so that you wouldn't dare to go in it. No body went in it arter *that*, you know; beside there's mighty land slides some times in these mountains, and who knows but half a mountain has slipped down over the cave and kivered it up.

"Well, stranger, when your book comes out, I do wish you'd send the old man one of 'em. I'd like to read them things over. It would do my heart good in my old days."

"Where shall I send it?"

"Send it to Noble's Post Office, White County, State of Arkansaw, to Tom Giles; and I'll be sure to get it."

"I go over thar, at least, once every month, and always go to the store whar they keep the post office, and if thar's any thing for me, I'll get it."

"You may look for it in three months."

"Then, stranger, that will be afore I get back. I'm taken a turn through the country with this here varmint, jest to see what I can make by him. You make books mighty fast now days. I thought it took a life time to make a book."

"It formerly did; but they are made by steam now."

Tom Giles gave a long whistle.

"Make books by steam, stranger? Well, that beats all natur. I never hearn tell of that afore."

"As you are traveling merely for profit, if you will stay a few days with me, I will pay you. I have gathered a great many details from different persons, and will be glad to read them over to you, so that you may correct whatever errors there may be in the story."

"What will you give me, stranger?"

"What do you think will be a fair compensation for your time?"

"Indeed, I can't say, but some days I can make a dollar a day by showing this varmint."

"I will give you a dollar a day."

"And board me?"

"Yes, and board you."

"It won't be hard work, will it, stranger?"

"No; I hope not. You will only have to sit and hear me read my notes, and wherever there is any

mistake in them, tell me of it, so that I may correct it."

"Well, all that seems mighty easy. I'll do it."

"I am glad of it. This meeting is not entirely an accident. I have been following you for several days, and when I rode up to the tavern an hour ago, and saw you standing at the door, I was sure it was you, from the description I had of your person, and stopped to talk with you."

"Well, stranger, that *is* strange, to think that you would ride so far, and be enquirin' from time to time for such a poor old man as me. But, how did you, living way off in Connecticut, ever hear any thing about this affair?"

"I was clerk in a dry goods store, and one day picked up an old newspaper, from which I got part of the story. I became so much interested in it, that I wrote to several persons, who were named in the paper, for further information; only one of my letters was answered. I kept up a correspondence with the person who replied to me, until I got the names and places of residence of several others, who also knew parts of the matter. At last I determined to travel, and collect all the information I could upon the subject, and make, if I can, a book of it."

"Well, stranger, there was something put out about it in the papers; but, people hereabouts, thought it was best not to be printing it, and so it stopped."

Our travelers now seated themselves in a small, back room in the tavern, and Mr. Strong took from his saddle bags a large roll of papers—some in whole sheets, others in scraps, and began to read them.

CHAPTER II.

IT is an old time's story which we are about to tell. The actors in it, with but few exceptions, are dead. Some, indeed, remain among the settlers on the mountain sides, and in the deep forests, and among the Indians, now west of the Mississippi. These Indians still keep the tale, as a tradition, among them, and, perhaps, will hand it down from generation to generation, as long as their tribes remain. It is these old traditions, and half-forgotten narratives, that we wish now to reunite, as a Mason does his materials, until the tale shall be told.

We would be glad if an abler pen than ours would give form and shape, and if it can be done with materials so rude, beauty to the structure; but, in our country, so fruitful in tales of romantic interest, such pens already find full employment in arranging materials already before them. Unless, therefore, we shall preserve the story, the whole of these fragments may be lost and forgotten forever.

“Stop a bit thar, squire,” said Tom Giles; “I don’t like that, because I’m sure you can do the thing up as good as any body; and, squire, that thar beginnin’ is a leattle too much like a sarmon for me. You know the bargain is, that I am to pint out all mistakes, so that you will have it exactly right.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, go on squire. I jest stopped you a leattle.

A dollar a day and board is good wages, and I want to yearn my money."

* * * * *

Richard Rashleigh was a gentleman of good family, and ample fortune in the west of England. He had read Rousseau's Social Contract, and Sydney on Government, and other books of that kind, until republicanism became, with him, first a principle, and then a passion. He loved to talk of the beauties of a republican form of government, of the natural equality of man, the right of the people to make their own laws, and to govern themselves. He declaimed against monarchies and aristocracies. In England he found few persons who heartily sympathised with him; he, therefore, in despair, resolved to quit his native land forever, and to remove to the United States, where his theories were already formed into constitutions and laws, and where he was sure of finding a whole people, whose principles and practice were in harmony with his own.

He sent out an agent to purchase a plantation for him, with instructions to find one in the mild climate of some of the southern States, west of the Alleghanies, where conventionalism had not yet exerted its power, to check the natural freedom of society, and destroy its simplicity.

His agent found a plantation in East Tennessee, bounded on its three sides by the Tennessee River, where it forms what is called a "horse shoe," that extended nearly around it. A large part of the plantation had already been cleared by a planter (and his slaves,) who wished to return to North Carolina, his native State, and, therefore, availed himself of the opportunity to sell it low, for cash.

"That's all right, squire; the planter's name was Tom Yardley; he came from the forks of the Yadkin, six years before he sold out to Rashleigh. And a bad job it was for the settlement when he sold out to him.

"Go on, squire. Are you most done?"

The agent built a house for Mr. Rashleigh, according to a plan which he brought with him. It was situated on a hill, which rose gently from the river.

"Squire," said Giles, interrupting him, "that was the queerest looking house that ever mortal man laid eyes on. It was a brick one, with great, square things at each side, that they called towers, and big, old fashioned windows, and a thing on the top, like the place they hang bells on in court houses, and big taverns. Yes, it did front to the north; and it was a dreadful eye sore to the whole settlement, until it was burnt down. Go on, squire."

"Mr. Rashleigh sold out his land and stocks in England, and, in due time, with a retinue of faithful servants, who followed him, came to his new home."

"Squire, he brought four men with him for farmers, and three men to wait on him about the house, and one fat old fellow named Jinks, to drive his carriage, and a whole parcel of women, and furniture enough for a hundred families. Indeed he did, squire."

East of his place of residence, was the large country inhabited by the Cherokee Indians, and at intervals for twenty or thirty miles west of him, were planters, squatters, and other settlers, who had recently removed to the fertile lands on the Tennessee River.

About the same time that Mr. Rashleigh came there, Edward Norton, a young man, nearly thirty years of age, removed with his slaves from North Carolina to

a plantation two miles below that of Mr. Rashleigh's, on the Tennessee River.

"Stop thar, squire; that's not right. Rashleigh came in the fall, and Norton did not get to his place till the next spring arterwards. If you want this old man to back your book, you must have the thing all right to a tee, or you 'll never git him to do it."

Business called Norton to Charlestown soon after he had settled on his plantation. He had some friends among the young men of that city, in whose company the hours flew rapidly, until the time had nearly arrived when he should return.

Before he did so, he and some of his friends, while sauntering one morning about the city, came to an auction for slaves. The house in which it was held, was a low, one story frame building—one of a long row of such houses on the south side of the street. The roof was covered with green moss, and the weather-boarding, once white, was discolored by age and smoke. A crowd of persons was standing in the house. The auctioneer stood on a low platform on the south side of the room, while he was conducting the sale. Near it was another platform, higher than the first, ten or twelve feet long, and five or six feet wide, on which stood the slaves, as they were sold. A large desk stood on the floor, at which a clerk was seated, making entries of the sales. The desk and platforms were separated by a low, wooden railing from the other part of the room. Old barrels, and boxes, and broken chairs, ranged against the wall, served for seats for such of the spectators as chose to use them.

When Norton and his friends went in, there was a general hum of conversation among the dense crowd

outside of the railing. Three Frenchmen, two or three Spaniards, and several men in drab overcoats, that extended nearly to their heels, were nearest the stand of the auctioneer, and appeared to be more interested than the others, in the sales.

After a delay of not more than a minute, the auctioneer called out: "Now, gentlemen, I am going to offer you something worth bidding for. Here she comes, gentlemen."

"Help her up here, Jim;" speaking to a black man, a servant at the place, "help her up quick. The gentlemen here want to look at her."

A girl, about sixteen years of age, was placed upon the stand. She had on her a coarse, calico dress, which was torn and soiled; an old worn out slipper on one foot, and a stocking, full of holes, on the other. Her coarse, black hair hung over her face and neck—uncombed and uncared for.

"Look at her, gentlemen, did you ever see such a figure, sylph-like and graceful. Many a rich lady would give half her fortune if she could buy for herself such a shape as that."

The girl trembled, turned her face to the wall, and covered it with her hands.

"Come, what's your name? Ah! I see it on the catalogue. Come, Huldah, modesty is a good thing in its place, but you must turn round and let the gentlemen have a good look at you." And he turned her face to the crowd, and made her take her hands from it.

"I ask you to look at this face, gentlemen. See what large, lustrous, black eyes, and what even, pearly teeth. Did you ever see such before?

"Who bids, gentlemen? I can't wait; indeed I can't. I have twenty-two more to sell to-day."

"Eight hundred dollars," said one of the Frenchmen.

"Thank you, Mr. De Courcy, but I can't start with such a bid as that."

"Why, look at this girl, gentlemen. She is nearly white; her hair is straight, and see what glossy blackness it has; warranted sound, gentlemen, or no sale."

"Who bids?"

"Nine hundred dollars," said one of the Spanish gentlemen.

"Thank you, sir. Nine hundred dollars is bid; only nine hundred for positively the most beautiful girl that ever stood on this block. Indeed, gentlemen, I never saw so beautiful a creature before. Nine hundred dollars; going at nine hundred."

"It's a shame, gentlemen; indeed it is. Why, only last week I sold two girls, neither of them, half so pretty as this, to two mechanics of this city; one of them, a bricklayer, gave a thousand dollars for one of the girls, and the other, a shoemaker, gave eleven hundred for the other; and will you, young planters, let them out bid you, where such a beauty as this is for sale? Positively I am ashamed of you, gentlemen."

A low groan was heard. It seemed to come from one of the spectators at the west end of the room.

"Did you hear that groan, gentlemen? It was for your want of chivalry and taste. Indeed I am ready to groan for you, myself."

Another and louder groan was heard.

"Thank you, sir; you ought to be groaned at, gentlemen."

“Nine hundred dollars only is bid. I can’t dwell, gentlemen; indeed I can’t. Make up your minds soon.”

“Nine hundred and five dollars,” said one of the men dressed in drab overcoats.

“Thank you, sir; but we can’t take five dollar bids here. We can’t waste our time on such trifles. Shall I say nine hundred and fifty, sir?”

The man, in a drab overcoat, seemed very much ashamed of himself, and after a short pause, and with a look of some embarrassment, said, “Yes, sir.”

“Nine hundred and fifty dollars is bid. Only nine hundred and fifty dollars for the most beautiful girl that ever stood on this auction block, gentlemen.

“Why look at her, gentlemen; see how the damask rose blooms on her downy cheek. See what thin and lovely lips she has; see, too, how modest she is. Modesty, gentlemen, is an excellent thing in woman. We love it in our mothers and sisters.”

Another groan was heard—deep and sad.

“Go round their, Jim. May be some gentleman has the colic, and something should be done for him.

“I can’t dwell, gentlemen; indeed I can’t.

“Who bids?”

“One thousand,” said Mr. De Courcy.

“Thank you, sir. You have an eye for beauty, sir. I like your fine taste.

“A thousand dollars is bid, gentlemen. Going for only a thousand dollars. A girl of sweet sixteen—just blooming into womanhood, nearly white.

“Turn round, Huldah; walk across the platform, and let the gentlemen see your movements.

“See there, gentlemen, graceful as a swan; how

lightly she steps, and see what small feet and hands she has; what small, delicate ears, and what a beautiful nose, and mouth, and chin. See what limbs she has, gentlemen, as white as any persons; how gracefully they taper down to her small feet. She comes from Virginia, gentlemen, and I have no doubt at all, but, of course, I can't warrant it, that some of the blood in her veins, is of the best in the old Dominion.

"Who bids, gentlemen; only a thousand dollars, and she has been not less than five minutes on the stand."

"A thousand and fifty," said the gentleman in a drab overcoat, who seemed now to have gotten over his embarrassment.

"A thousand and fifty dollars is bid. Going at only a thousand and fifty dollars." "Ah! sir," said the auctioneer, looking at the man in a drab overcoat, "I see you know what you are about. What an investment for a man of capital. There never has been such a bargain offered here before."

"Eleven hundred," said a voice not before heard in the bidding.

"Thank you, sir. Please come up nearer to the stand, that we may see the bidders. Eleven hundred dollars."

"And fifty," said the Frenchman.

"Twelve hundred dollars," said Norton, who had now come forward to the railing.

"Twelve hundred dollars, and no more, gentlemen. I am, positively, ashamed to sacrifice such property at these rates; but we can't dwell.

"Twelve hundred dollars, going, going—*gone*." He brought his hammer heavily upon the table as he uttered the word "*gone*;" and, at the same time, a groan

was heard louder and deeper than any that had been heard there before.

“Sare,” said the French gentleman, bowing to Norton, “I do congratulate you on one fine bargain. Ver cheap indeed, and ver pretty. I do like your fine taste, sare.”

“Thank you,” said Norton.

“Your name, sir,” said the auctioneer, bowing to Norton, “if you please.”

“Edward Norton.”

“Please come within the railing, to the desk, Mr. Norton, and the clerk will give you a bill of sale, and a receipt for the purchase money.

“Will you take the negro away to-day? or, if you prefer it, we can keep the property, for a few days, in our jail.”

“I will take her now, sir.”

Norton went to the clerk, paid the purchase money, and received the bill of sale.

While he was doing so, the auctioneer said: “Jim, bring out No. four.”

Number four was brought out. He was an old man, very black; his hair was slightly marked with gray.

“Stand up, old fellow, on the block,” said the auctioneer.

“Ef you please, master, excuse me. I am an old man—old enough to be your father.”

Another groan, not loud, but low and sad, was heard.

“Who is that making this strange music in this room? I thank the gentleman, whoever he may be, but too much of a good thing is worse than none at all. Get up on the block, old man.”

“Master, please excuse me. My mistress, in ole

Virginny, was a widow, and I was her foreman for twenty years. She never found any fault with me. We made good crops and got along well till she died, and I was sold four weeks ago by the 'ministrator. "'Ef I must be sold," said the old man, bursting into tears, "let me set down and be sold like a man, and not like a beast."

"Oh, Thomas! Thomas!" said an old man, dressed as a Quaker, who rose to his feet from the west end of the room, and burst into tears; "Oh, Thomas! what a business is this in which thou art engaged?"

The old man, whose broad hat half covered his face advanced to the railing.

"Oh! Thomas," said the old man, "I have not seen thee for ten years, and now to find thee here in this den of sin."

The auctioneer turned pale; his hammer trembled in his hand, his limbs, his whole person shook.

"Father!"

"Do not call me father here—my lost son."

"Father!"

The old man shook his head. "Thomas, I always heard that word from thee with gladness when thou wast an innocent boy. Do not use it here."

"Father," said the auctioneer, still trembling.

"I am not thy father. I never will own, as a son, a slave seller, nor a slave buyer. Thou hast disgraced an ancient and honorable name. Thou art an apostate from the faith of thy fathers," and, raising his hand upward, "from thy father in heaven."

"The old gentleman is somewhat excited," said Mr. De Courcy, to a man at his side. "Quite a scene here, indeed. Almost a tragedy, sir."

"Did you hear what the old fellow said," asked one of the drab coat men, turning to another dressed in the same garb.

"No; not particularly," was the reply.

"Why, sir, he actually called this a den of sin. I heard him with my own ears and can not be mistaken about it. He classed slave buyers too, with slave sellers. It is a gross and open insult. I can't stand it."

This was said so loudly, that all who were in the room heard it. The crowd became instantly excited and moved toward the Quaker. "Take him out. Tar and feather him. No apology can be made for such insults to gentlemen."

Tom Gilbert, the auctioneer, who had stepped off the stand but a moment before, now leaped upon it.

"Look here, men! This man is my father. The first man of you that lays the weight of a finger on him, or who utters another insulting word, gets the whole contents of this," taking from a drawer before him a large horse pistol; "and this," showing another from the same drawer, "and as many more as will satisfy him."

"Gentlemen, the sale for to-day is over. We'll close the doors, if you please."

"I don't know any thing about that sale," said Tom Giles, "and what I don't know, in course you can't expect me to tell. I've seen the girl a thousand times arter she were brought home, and she was as pretty a nigger as ever I sot eyes on. Jest such a gal as the auctioneer said she was; and I did hear, too, there was some kind of fuss at the auction, and that she was the last that auctioneer ever sold; but that's only hear-say, mind you, don't set it down for a fact. But,

there's one thing I can tell you, squire, that you ought to know, and as you come from Connecticut, I 'spose, in reason you don't know it. It will never do to put niggers in your book along with white folks. I am conscientiously and tee-totally forninst it. Indeed I am."

"What shall I do, then?" said Mr. Strong. "This, you know, is a part of the story, and this girl must often be mentioned in it."

"I don't know, indeed I don't, squire, how you can fix it. But, it seems to me you had better have a kind of kitchen to your book, and put all the niggers in that. Can't you have something at the eend of the book—a kind of quarter like, for the niggers?"

"And the Indians, also?" said Strong; "for, you know that Gray Eagle and some other Indians must be mentioned."

"No, squire, not the red skins; you can mix them with white folks. But, as for putting niggers along side white people, I am conscientiously and tee-totally forninst it. Indeed, I am. But, squire, I can excuse you for this, bein' as you come from Connecticut, whar, in course, the people don't know no better."

"Squire, I've seen books that are like houses with closets and cupboards all over 'em. Can't you have kind of closets to your book?"

"I don't understand you," said Strong.

"Why, down at the bottom of 'em are places for things not fit to be in the room."

"Notes?"

"I s'pose so, squire. Put all about Huldah in the notes at the bottom, and then, them that likes to read it can do so or not, jest as they please."

"Go on, squire."

CHAPTER III.

THE apartment from which the slaves were brought into the auction room, was separated from it by a partition of thin boards. A door, near to the clerk's desk, opened into it, and Norton, as soon as he had paid for Huldah, went into this place for her.

It was a long, narrow, and badly lighted room, with but three windows, which were square and near the ceiling, on the south side, and secured by iron bars. They were covered with cobwebs and dust; each window was about two feet long, and two wide. The room was sunk below the surface of the ground, except near the windows, and rough boards, brown with smoke and age, were nailed upright against the walls, all around it. Some wooden benches stood by the sides of the walls, and on these were seated about twenty slaves, brought there for the sale of that day.

Two coarse looking white men, with red faces, and canes in their hands, and pistols in their coat pockets, were sometimes walking up and down the room, and at other times standing in the middle of it, talking to each other.

As soon as Norton entered, he paused and looked around the place. The old man who had been offered for sale was seated at the east end of the room, near the door, with his elbows resting on his knees, and his face covered with his hands. He raised his head as Norton passed before him, and sat upright for a minute,

and then his chin dropped upon his breast, and his hands hung, feebly and listlessly, by his side. There was, in his face, deep, calm sorrow, without a gleam of hope—glooming into despair. It told the story of a life of fidelity and meekness; sometimes cheered by a single ray of hope, as of a little star shining alone at midnight, when all else is thickly covered with black clouds and darkness—and that light was slowly—slowly fading away—and almost gone.

His looks were those of one who is trying to remember some shadowy dream of hope or joy. His dream of life was nearly over, and it was a sad and troubled dream. The dim light from the window shed a passing gleam over his dark features, and then a cloud came across the sun, and the old man sat in shadow. A faint and almost inaudible sigh escaped from him, as he changed his position and leaned his head against the wall.

Norton gazed at him for a moment, and passed on.

A large and tall mulatto woman was seated on the floor, on the south side of the room, with her head lying upon the bench by her side, and the end of a shawl thrown over her face. She was motionless till the sound of Norton's footsteps, as he approached, aroused her, and she raised her head and supported it by one hand, while she leaned with her elbow upon the bench. Her jet, black hair was nearly straight, and half covered her features.

“Are you for sale?”

“Yes, sir. I'se bin brought in here from the jail to-day.”

“Are you willing to be sold?”

The woman looked at Norton with glazed and half frenzied eyes, and repeated.

“Willing to be sold?”

“Willing to be sold?” and then paused and looked him steadily in the face.

“Willing to be sold?” she added; “willing to be sold from my husband—my children and all that I love in this world?” and covering her face with her hands, burst into an agony of passionate grief.

“Oh, God!” said she, as she sobbed, “how can a human being be willing to be sold like a beast.”

One of the white men came up and said: “Stop that noise, we must have order here.”

The man turned to Norton: “We’ve got a fine lot of niggers for sale here—a choice lot. That old man by the door, that you have just been looking at, is trusty and will make a first-rate foreman on a plantation, and this here woman is a good cook and washer, and ironer, and a good housekeeper. Let me show you, sarr, some of the rest of ‘em. There never was a finer lot brought into this market than is here to-day.”

“Thank you, I have purchased a girl to-day, and have come in for her. I do not want any more.”

“All right, sarr. We make it a rule not to press gentlemen to buy. It’s not polite to do so, sarr. We’ve sold only one girl to-day, No. 3, on the catalogue; thar she is in that corner,” pointing to the south-west corner of the room.

Not far from Norton, was a stout, black man, about thirty years of age, dressed in a shirt and pantaloons of coarse, white cotton cloth, and without hat or shoes. The front of his head was bald; he had a surly look.

“You are for sale, I suppose?”

"Yes, masser."

"You dont seem to care for it."

"No, not much; none as I knows of. It don't make no difference to me who owns me or who don't own me. I've got to do all the work I can, and they is got to give me as much to eat and warr as will keep soul and body together any how."

"I suppose you have been sold before?"

"Yes, I'se bin sold a dozen times; may be more."

"Are you married?"

"Yes, masser, I'se had four wives."

"Where are they?"

"Don't know; scattered 'bout here and thar in places whar I'se bin. Maybe some is dead now."

"Have you children?"

"I'se had seven children, but don't know what's 'come of 'em; maybe some is sold down south. I'se not seen one of 'em for two years, and never 'spect to see 'em again."

"You don't seem to care much at your separation from them?"

"No; what's the use of taking on? It won't help me nor them; 'ef I was to cry myself to death, I can not see any of 'em, nor do 'em any good."

The other guard now come up to Norton, and touching his hat, said: "A fine lot for sale here to-day, sir. This woman," pointing to one who was opposite them seated upright on the bench, "is a capital cook, and will make a good field hand if you want one. She can do as much hoeing or plowing in a day as a man; and is kind and good tempered. Look up Sally at the gentleman."

The woman rose and came toward them.

“Buy me, massa. I’m afear’d I’ll be bought by the speculators, and used bad. I likes *your* looks, and is sure you’ll be good to me.”

“I can not do so. I’ve no money to spare, and did not come here to buy.”

“Oh! don’t say so massa. White gentlemen always has money enough when they wants to buy colored people. I’m sure young master can do it, ’ef he only will; and I’ll be a good servant to you. I can sew, and wash, and iron, and do any kind of in-door work, but I aint used to worken out doors in the field, and I’se afear’d I’m too old to learn now.”

“I can not purchase you. I hope Sally you’ll get a good master.”

“Thank you. God bless you, master,” said Sally, dropping a low courtesy, and taking her seat.

Huldah was still seated in the corner. Her mother, with a young child in her arms, was standing half bent over her. A little boy, about five years old, and a tall, handsome and intelligent looking mulatto man, apparently about twenty-five years of age, both of them her brothers, were standing before her.

Norton sat down by the side of Huldah.

“Huldah, I have bought you.”

“Yes, masser.”

“I have come for you. I want you to go with me.”

“Yes, masser,” said Huldah, faintly, dropping her head.

“I will be a kind master, if you will be a faithful servant.”

“Yes, masser.”

“Are you willing to go with me, Huldah?”

“Yes, masser.”

“Well, get your bundle and come along with me.”

“Oh, master!” said the mother, “do buy the rest of us. Don’t part us; don’t part what’s left of us, master; for God’s sake, please don’t master.”

“I did not know when I bid for her that she had a mother and brothers for sale, or, perhaps, I would not have done so; but, it’s too late now, I’ve bought and paid for her.”

“Do, master, buy us, and keep us all together,” said the older brother; “my mother is a good servant. We are all healthy and will be obedient. You’ll not lose a cent by us.”

“I have no money to spare. I do not want any more servants. I have as many now as I know what to do with.”

“Oh, master!” said the mother, “don’t part us; please don’t part what’s left of us. Some of us has bin parted already; do please, master, keep us together, for God’s sake, master, do. It’s mighty hard to tear a mother from her own child. Don’t tear my own child away from me.”

“I have no money to buy you.”

“Master, can’t you contrive some way for us all to be sold together. It seems like it would tear my heart out to part me from my own child.”

“I can not buy you. It is useless to urge me. I will be a good, kind master, if Huldah will be a faithful servant.”

“She always has been a good child, master, and can do any thing most ’bout the house. She’s got no bad ways. Do be good to her, and God will bless you, master. Can’t you let her stay here with us a day or

two longer? It seems so sudden-like to part from her, now."

"No; my passage in the stage is already paid, and I leave soon after dinner." Norton told them his name, and where he lived.

"Come, Huldah!"

Huldah rose—her little brother grasped her torn dress with both his hands, and leaned his head closely against her side.

"Let go, Benny. I must go with new master."

Ben looked eagerly in her face, still grasping her dress.

"You aint going now, Huldah! is you, Huldah?"

"Yes, Benny."

Ben leaned his head against her and cried bitterly.

The color fled from the lips and face of Huldah as she extended her hand—"Good-by, mother."

Her mother held her babe in one arm, and placed the other on Huldah's shoulder, gazed in her face, and burst into a frantic wail of grief. "Oh! my child, my child, we parts now forever." She released her grasp. "It's no use, Huldah, we 'se got to part."

Huldah wiped her eyes with her dress, and extended her trembling hand to her eldest brother.

"Good-by, Isaac."

Isaac's upper lip quivered; a slight tremor passed over his person; he stooped and kissed her—"Good-by, sister."

"Mother, let me take little Lizzie in my arms afore I go, and nuss her once more."

Her mother handed the babe to Huldah. She took it and sat below a window, laid it on her lap, and gazed earnestly at it, and then passed her hand gently over

its face. The child stretched out its little hands and laughed, and then became sad and cried. Huldah pressed it to her bosom.

"Come, Huldah, we must go now."

She handed the child to its mother; took from beneath the seat a small bundle, tied in a check apron, paused for an instant, and looked back at the group as she reached the open door. The door closed behind her, and the wail of her mother was no longer heard.

She followed Norton as he walked along the street to his hotel, with a torn slipper on one foot, and a ragged stocking on the other, her dress flying in the wind, carrying her little bundle in one hand, while, with the other, she wiped the tears from her face.

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE Norton was at Charleston, some of the incidents connected with our story took place in his neighborhood in Tennessee.

About half a mile from the dwelling of Mr. Rashleigh, on the south bank of the Tennessee River, stood a log cabin with but one room, in which lived a certain Tom Giles, and his large family.

"That's me," said the old man, striking his large fist heavily on the table at which they were sitting: "That's me as sure as shootin', and that large family was Polly and the young 'uns. Push on, squire, I want to hear what's a comin'."

Giles and his wife, and other members of his family often visited Mr. Rashleigh's dwelling.

"In course," said Tom, "bein' as they war our nighest neighbors."

At day break, one Saturday morning, a loud knocking was heard at the front door of Rashleigh's house.

It was opened by a servant.

"Is the captin at home?" said Tom Giles.

"The captain!" said the servant; "What captain?"

"I mean the old 'un; the boss."

"Maybe you want the gardener. He is not up yet, I believe; but if you will go round to his lodge, back of the house, you can find him."

"No; I don't want him—nor the likes of him. I

want to see the owner of this here place; the head captin."

"He is not up yet."

"What! not out of bed yet, and the sun half an hour high? I want you jest to step up to him and tell him to come down here, for I'm in a hurry."

"I do not like to disturb him. Will you please wait a few minutes? He is an early riser."

"No; I can't wait a minute. Tell him to come down right away."

"What name, sir," said the servant.

"Name! Don't you know my name? I am your nighest neighbor—Tom Giles."

The servant went up stairs, and came back, saying: "Mr. Rashleigh will be down in a few minutes, sir. Please take a seat in the hall till he comes."

Giles seated himself—took off his hat and laid it on the floor—looked up at the ceiling, and then at every thing else within his view.

After he had waited a few minutes, he became impatient, got up and went to the room the servant had gone into.

He opened the door just wide enough to get his head in, and said: "The captin's mighty slow about comin'; maybe he's turned over and tuk another nap. I wish you would go up and give him a good shaking; tell him to come quick, cause I'm in a great hurry."

The servant looked amazed. Tom opened the door and walked up to him. In a half whisper, he inquired, "Is he dangerous? Is he hard on his people?"

"No," said the servant, "he is very kind—wait a little longer and he will be down."

"Gettin' ready for breakfast, eh? What a nice pewter mug this is;" taking up the cream cup and holding it close to his face. "Lots of pewter here, and so bright, too!"

"It's silver," said the servant.

"Silver!" said Giles, "Silver! Eat off of silver—well, that's grand. But, hurry up starrs, old, boy, and tell the captin, Tom Giles is a waitin' for him."

Mr. Rashleigh at this moment entered the room and bowed to his neighbor.

"Good mornin', Captin. Glad to see you; hope you're well," said Tom Giles, extending his hand, which Mr. Rashleigh took, as he bid Giles be seated.

"No, thank you, captin; I'm in something of a hurry. I stepped over to ask a favor of you this mornin'."

"I shall be happy to be of service to you, neighbor," said Mr. Rashleigh. "What can I do for you?"

"Why, you see, captin, my wife has seen you a riden round in that nice carriage of yours, and she's took a notion to take a ride in it herself. I want you to lend it to me to-day, to take Polly and the children to Camp Meetin'. We'll be back a little arter sun down, and I'll take some corn along in a bag to feed your horses."

Mr. Rashleigh raised his eyebrows, and looked somewhat surprised, when Tom Giles proceeded: "There's eight of us; me and Polly and the six children, but I can squeeze 'em all in, captin."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Rashleigh, "I greatly regret to refuse you, but really I can not lend my carriage."

"What! not lend it to a neighbor to go to meetin'—to Camp Meetin'?"

"No, sir. I wish to be on good terms with my neigh-

bors, and to oblige them whenever I can; but really, sir, I am somewhat surprised at such a request."

"Well, captin, no harm's done. We must all go a foot though its six miles, and Polly is rather weakly, she's got a crick in her back. We might a bin thar afore this, 'ef I had not a bin kept a waitin' on you so long."

"I am sorry, sir, that you have been detained," said Rashleigh.

"Good mornin', captin." Mr. Rashleigh bowed to his neighbor, and the servant accompanied Giles to the door.

"I don't see any use for puttin' that in your book, squire; it's all straight enough. I'd most forget it, but now it's fresh in my mind."

"It has something to do with the book," said Mr. Stone.

"Well, well, squire, let it stand then. Nobody that will read the book knows me, and I don't care. It's true, any how."

From the time the agent purchased the plantation till within a few months of the day when Rashleigh was favored by the visit from Tom Giles, there had been a large and constant expenditure of money on behalf of Rashleigh. The men who were employed to build the house, and the families, which some of them brought with them, purchased their supplies of food from the neighbors; and after the buildings were completed, the large family of Rashleigh were dependent, principally, upon the neighborhood for their provisions. These were paid for, generally, in gold; and this new and ready market was of great service to the neighborhood. In addition to this, the riches of Mr. Rashleigh—his fine furniture and horses, and white servants, were the

subject of conversation for miles around his dwelling. But the topic had lost its novelty and interest, and as Rashleigh's plantation now yielded ample supplies for the household—the golden stream, whose little rills had gladdened many hearts, had now almost ceased to flow. While the business of preparing to live was going on, Mr. Rashleigh was often among his neighbors; his urbane manners, and still more his prompt payment of such prices as his neighbors chose to ask, made him many friends. He, now, when it was no longer necessary for him to go abroad, confined himself, with rare exceptions, to his plantation.

There is a point, in some men's lives, where popularity ceases and public displeasure begins, and his refusing to lend his carriage to Tom Giles, was that point in the life of Rashleigh.

When Giles and his family got to the Camp Meeting, he first took his wife and children to the tent of an acquaintance, and then, without stopping to rest for a moment, went outside to a wagon filled with water mellons, around which was a group of his associates.

"I say men, this here fellow that's squatted down among us, is 't the right sort of a man. I jest went over to his house this mornin' to borer his carriage to come to Camp Meetin', cause Polly, you see, has got a pain in her back, and thought she'd like to ride in the thing. Well, when I got thar, though it was arter sun up, the fellow was in bed. I sent word to him to come down quick, but he kept me a waitin', I don't know how long. While I was thar, I just went into the room, and on the table thar was lots of silver things; one for milk, and one for sugar, and half a dozen more. When

he did come at last, I axed him perlitey and neighborly, for the loan of the thing only for a day—and don't you think he would 't let me have it; for all he aint a goin' to use it himself to-day, and hardly ever rides in it."

"Maybe it was out of order," said one of the men. "Maybe a wheel was broke, or something like that."

"No; nothin' of that sort, cause you see if it had been, he 'd of said so; he was mighty smoothe and seemed afear'd to rile me."

"It 's a shame," said one of the men. "It 's not neighborly. I would not have believed it of him if you had 't of told me, Mr. Giles; we have never had sich doings in our settlement afore. Things has always been better regulated here than that. He 's an aristocrat."

"I tell you what it is," said Bill Gaines, "from the first minute I laid eyes on that man, I set him down for an aristocrat, and I have not changed my mind about him yet."

"Thar 's no mistake about it," said Ned Allen, "I always suspected, and now I know it."

"Well, what shall we do," said Bill Gaines, "we can 't allow such goins on in our settlement. It 's a disgrace to the state."

"Well, neighbors," said James Weston, a thick, heavy set, elderly man, "my opinion is, that the very best thing we can do with the man is to let him be. If he won't neighbor with us, we need not neighbor with him, and then we 'll be as well off as we were afore he came into the settlement. I don't know, and I don't care whether he is an aristocrat or not; this is a free country, and a man can be a democrat if he likes, or

an aristocrat if he likes—it's nobody's business but his own."

"That's all very purty talken," said Bill Gaines, "but when a man's in Rome, he must do as Rome does. That's the law of this settlement."

In the afternoon, Bill Gaines, Tom Giles, and others met at a place, near the Camp ground, and Giles again stated to his friends, how badly he had been treated that morning by Rashleigh, and what he had seen in his house. He added, that the man who came to the door to let him in, when he knocked, had on a little, white apron, like a girl's, and said he would swar to it on a stack of Bibles as high as a meeting-house.

Weston was not there, and as there was now no breakwater to stay the rising tide of public indignation, Rashleigh was adjudged an aristocrat.

Soon after the meeting, a series of petty annoyances began, by which Rashleigh was admonished, that from some cause, which he did not comprehend, he had become unpopular in the neighborhood. The fences around his fields were thrown down, and his growing crops were injured by his neighbor's cattle. Cow bells were rung, and pans were beaten, accompanied by hideous howlings at midnight, near his dwelling. When he approached a group of his neighbors, either on horseback or in his carriage, they would whisper to each other and look intently at him, and when he passed them, the whole group would laugh and shout.

One day as he was on horseback alone, he saw three of these men, Wash McGee, Bill Gaines and Tom Giles, by the road side, looking earnestly at him, and conversing in a tone which lowered as he got nearer to them. He quietly dismounted and fastened his horse to the

limb of a tree, went up to them, and inquired in what manner either himself or persons in his employment had given them offense.

"Oh!" said Gaines, "you know well enough. It's no use for you to pretend to be so simple hearted. You can't ketch old birds with sich chaff as that."

"I wish, neighbors, to live in peace with all men," said Rashleigh.

"Very nice talk, sir; but, if you want peace, the best way to get it is, to go out of these parts."

"Why, neighbors, I have bought my land and paid for it; you have no greater right to compel me to leave, than I have to make a like demand of you."

"Aint we? Well, we'll show you," said Gaines. "We're old settlers in these parts."

"I will appeal, if need be, to the law of my adopted country for protection."

"Who cares for law," said Gaines; "we've got a law among ourselves, and mean to make you and every other proud aristocrat, as you are, walk up to it. Yes, every sich fellow shall toe the mark."

"Neighbors, I am not an aristocrat. I left my native country and came to this, because I prefer—greatly prefer, the form of government here, to that which is, as I fear, too firmly established in England. But for that preference, I never would have left the land of my fathers. As for my pride, I feel that the charge is too true to be repelled. I am not as humble as a good christian should be; but I hope to become better as I grow older."

"Do you hear that?" said Gaines; "he owns up to it right squar. I'll tell you what, old fellow, if you don't get on your hoss and move away right quick,

I'll take the starch out of you so soon, that you won't be much older before you're softened down a leattle. I'm riled now," said he, taking off his coat and laying his hat on the ground, "and can whip any Englishman that ever trod shoe leather. Come on, old fellow, 'ef you dar, and we'll fight it out on the spot."

"Excuse me," said Rashleigh, "I have no wish to hurt you, or disturb the peace of the neighborhood, and there are three of you. I am alone."

"Hurt me! Hurt me! Well, that sounds sweet in my ears," said Bill Gaines, with an angry laugh. "Boys, did you hear that? Hurt me if you can, and as much as you can. You have a little too much starch in you yet, I see."

"I certainly do not wish to hurt or to be hurt," quietly replied Rashleigh; "but if you attack me, I will defend myself."

Bill Gaines uttered a loud yell, and rushed at Rashleigh, who, by a single well aimed blow, felled him to the ground, and without waiting for an attack from McGee and Tom Giles, he knocked each of them down in an instant.

He then mounted his horse and rode slowly away.

In a minute, all three were again on their feet.

"Whar did he hit you?" said Tom Giles.

"Right back of my ear," replied McGee.

"Why, he hit me thar, too."

"And me."

"He never took his gloves off," said Tom Giles, "and he seemed to hit you so easy, that the blow could not hurt you. And, then, how squarr he stood, and how careless he seemed about the whole thing. I believe that fellow can whip a whole regiment of men in a far

fight. Indeed I do. Nothing looked strange about him, but his eyes; they blazed like a wild cat's."

"I'll tell you what it is," said Tom Giles, "I 'spect that man is a reglar boxer; one of them kind that goes round and gives lessons in sparring, as they call it, in the old settlements. I'll give him a round silver dollar, 'ef he will show me the knack of that thing, so as I can do it as well as he. 'Ef he will, I'll go to all the general musters in the country, and whip them out by regiments. And another thing, boys, I hate a proud man, that is, when he 's proud of his fine clothes and horses, or a new rifle; but that man 's got something to be proud of. A man as can knock three such men as we are, has a right to be proud. I'd be proud myself—I 'spect I would, at least, 'ef I could do that trick as nice as him. Let 's forgive him, boys, and let him stay in the settlement. Every man is a little wrong sometimes, and in some things."

"I'll forgive him," said Bill Gaines. "I like him. He 's game. I like any man whether he 's purty or ugly, if he 's got pluck."

"And so do I," said Wash McGee. "I'll let him be hereafter. And 'ef he treats me well, I'll treat him well."

"Squire," said Tom Giles, "you 've got that all right. But I don 't see no use in putting sich leatle neighborhood scrimmages as that in a book. Indeed I don 't. Two years afore that there was a row at Webber's tav-crn, one Saturday arter noon, that beat it all hollow. I 'l tell you how it was."

"I don 't doubt it, Giles," said Mr. Stone; "but that is aside from our story. You know, I must stick to the text."

"Ah! well," said the old man, smoothing his chin with his hand, "I 'spose you must. But 'ef these leatle things, that nobody cared about, will do to put in a book, what a rouser would that scrimmage make, whar twenty men were fighting all together, at Webber's tavern."

CHAPTER V.

RASHLEIGH called his plantation Arcadia, and still read, with unabated interest, Sidney on Government, Harrington's Oceana, and Rousseau's Social Contract, and kept up an extensive correspondence with republicans in England, in Germany, and France, and the United States. He attributed the slight outbreak of neighborhood displeasure, which he had encountered, only to the rudeness of the persons who were engaged in it. That was over now, and he lived in peace. Indeed he thought, when he thought at all, upon the matter, that his neighbors seemed to treat him with greater deference, than they had ever done before. He very seldom left his plantation. On a pleasant day, not long after the interview with Tom Giles and his companions, he left home on a short excursion.

About dusk in the evening, and before his return, as some of Rashleigh's servants were standing at the front door of the house, they saw an object approaching, which immediately attracted their attention. It looked like an immense bird, covered with speckled feathers, with an owl's head, and great goggle eyes, walking upright like a pelican. It moved slowly, but steadily, toward the door.

"What on earth is it?" said Martha Winter, the housekeeper.

"It's a Roc," said John Huskett, "of the speckled variety. I knew the bird as soon as I laid eyes on it."

I prepared specimens of seven of these birds in Haustralia when I was there, and at the Cape of Good Ope, for his grace, the Duke of Devonshire. His grace presented one pair of them, which I had the 'onor of preparing for him, to the Prince of Wales, and another pair is in his grace's own Museum,—one on one side the door, the other on the hopposite side, just where I placed them myself with my own 'ands. The other three are in the Museum of Natural Istry in Lunnon, where thousands of people have seen them. The one that Sinbad, the sailor s.w, was gray; this is of the speckled variety. I knew it as soon as I seed it by its large, pendulous habdomen."

The object still came slowly and steadily on.

"It 's a ghost," said Susan, one of the housemaids, as she ran into the house; "get a gun and kill it."

The women all ran up stairs. The men remained firm.

"I am as sure as I am a man, that it is a 'Roc,' said Huskett. "I have killed fifty-two birds hexactly like it. Twenty of them in the Dutch settlement back of the Cape of Good Ope, and the others in Haustralia. They were not such dirty looking ones as this is. They were in Henglish Colonies, and in course were larger and better looking, and kept their feathers cleaner and neater than Hamerican birds. None but a fool would hexpect Hamerican birds to be as clean and as neat as hour Henglish birds, or as birds in the Henglish Colonies. See how the feathers of the bird are ruffled and turned the wrong way, as if it is too lazy to smooth them; and see what a dirty vite it is. I 'll 'av the 'appiness to skin it to-morrow, and make it look as clean and 'vite as them I 'av 'ad the honor to prepare for his

grace the Duke, and which are now in his grace's own Museum, vare I placed them with my own 'ands."

"It can't be a bird," said William Ashton; "don't you see it walks hupright."

"That honely shows your hone hignorance of hornithology," said Huskett. "Pelicans walks hupright, and Parrots nearly so. Roc's alvays walks hupright. Indeed I know it is a Roc by its valk, and hits pendulous habdomen."

The object came slowly and steadily on.

"It shall not henter this 'ouse," said Ashton, "so long as I 'ave the honor to serve Mr. Rashleigh."

The object still moved slowly toward the door.

"It 's a 'uman," said Susan, from the upper window.

John Huskett made a wide circuit round it, and said: "It's a biped."

The object shook its head rapidly, and Huskett went still nearer.

"It's a hanimal of the *genus homo*."

The object shook its head furiously. Huskett retreated a few steps.

Susan called out—"You may be sure it's a 'uman, or how could it know what you are a sayin'?"

John Huskett paused for a minute, as if the thought of Susan was slowly oozing into his brain. He then went fearlessly behind the object, and drew from his pocket a large knife with which he cut a cord that he now saw bound its hands. It rubbed its wrists, and slowly and carefully removed a large cloth which was covered on both sides with tar, and placed on its mouth.

"I am Thomas Jinks," he said, as soon as he could speak.

A loud scream was heard up stairs, and in an instant the whole group of servants gathered round him. His hands had been tied behind his back, and his limbs, which were tied above the knees, were released.

“Come in the ouse and tell us what this means.”

“I’ve took a solemn hoath never to henter this ouse till I tell you word for word the message the villians who served this trick on me, has sent to you.

“They said we’re hall white niggers, and has disgraced hall Hamerica by working for Mr. Rashleigh, who is hable to buy black niggers to work for him, and that if we don’t hall leave this settlement in ten days, they will tar and feather every soul of hus, and you may be sure they ’ll do it,—for they are bad enough to do hany thing,—except the gals, and they ’ll get husbands for them if they will leave Mr. Rashleigh.”

Susan laughed and blushed.

“What’s to laugh at here, girl?” said Huskett.
“This is a serious haffair.”

“O! I’m so glad it’s a man,” said Susan; “I thought it might be something worse.”

After hours of labor Thomas was relieved of his tar and feathers. It happened that Mrs. McGee had been at the house a few days before, and saw him standing behind his master’s chair at dinner.

This, of course, was told to the neighbors; at first it was not believed, until others who happened to call at the house saw Thomas with an apron on his portly person, in the place of a negro, waiting upon Rashleigh. The whole settlement was indignant.

“Did you ever hear of such a thing?” said Mrs. Giles, “for one white man to be a waiting on another white man. It’s a positive disgrace to the State.”

Thomas had walked out soon after dinner, and when he was about half a mile from the house, was seized by four men, who tied him, and then, with great deliberation, applied the tar and feathers, and let him go the bearer of the fearful message, which he had delivered.

When Mr. Rashleigh returned and was informed of this fresh outrage, his wrath knew no bounds. He determined to have the villains punished to the uttermost extent of the law, after he became calm, he assembled his servants, and assured them of his protection.

“Well, squire,” said Tom Giles, “that’s all right, but thar was no law-suit; cause you see he could not prove nothing, and it would not have been much if he had, cause you see the men what did it was worth nothing.”

Rashleigh’s indignation was so great, that he did not retire to rest until long after midnight.

As he sat musing in the dark and alone, he thought, “Is this republicanism a dream of enthusiasts?” A beautiful dream, indeed; but still only the idle vision of a distempered brain. And then he thought if man can not govern himself, can he govern others? At last he rose to retire, and said, speaking aloud to himself: “Yes, republicanism *is* right, but something more is needed. What is that something?”

He groped his way in the dark to his bed, repeating, as he did so, “Republicanism is good, very good, as far as it goes, but something else should be connected with it.”

“What is that something?

“What is that something?”

The shell may be sound and the kernal rotten.

CHAPTER VI.

WE are indebted to a nephew of Mr. Rashleigh's, now living in New York, for a few letters from that gentleman to his sister and friends, extracts from which will sometimes appear in our story. Mr. Rashleigh, with the care with which he did every thing, always had his letters, even his most familiar ones, copied into volumes which he kept for that purpose, and these volumes, strangely enough, have again crossed the Atlantic, and are carefully preserved by the nephew who inherited his estate.

Letter from Mr. Rashleigh to Mrs. Penhall, his sister, at — — —, England.

MY DEAR SISTER:

I thank you for your letter of 16th May last. The ways of this country, as I have already advised you, are in so bad a condition, that along many of them, no post coach can run. The mail is carried by a man on horseback, and comes but once a week. I am assured by persons, whose means of knowing the facts are very good, that this tardiness will be remedied very soon, and when that shall be done, I will hear oftener from you. We differ so greatly in our views of politics, that I am sure I can not so well interest, you if I write you upon that subject, as, perhaps, I may upon other, and, to you, more pleasing, matters.

Your adherence to church and king, and the zeal

with which you have supported both, when attacked in your presence, proves your loyalty and your conscientious adherence to that which you believe the right. My opinions, you know, differ greatly from yours. They are still unchanged.

I have to endure many privations here, of which you can have no thought. My servants are, as they always have been, faithful, and do every thing they can to make my life happy and my home comfortable. I fear they don't like the change they have made by coming to this country from "Merry old England;" but hope they will gradually become familiar with the persons and things around them, and be happy.

Our farm, or as it is called here, plantation, is fertile, and yields abundant harvests. My books are still the same unfailing source of pleasure which they have always been; so that, although my life is monotonous, it is not unhappy.

Indeed, my dear sister, there are many things in the United States, that tends to make the life, even of a recluse, pleasant. I have often looked from my dwelling at one of the highest points of the Cumberland Mountains, and wished to ascend it for the fine prospect which I was sure its summit would afford; but, I did not know, until recently, that a path has been cut, by which the point is easily accessible on horseback. As soon as I knew this, I determined to make the ascent, and yesterday, I did so.

The path is but a narrow trail which is here called a trace, covered in places with loose stone, but it is safe, and so winds by the side of the mountain, that the ascent is easy.

By walking part of the way and leading my horse,

and when the path was safe and not too steep, by riding slowly, I reached the place which I had selected as my point of observation. It is on the west side of the mountain and quite near the top, and much higher than the other summits of that range.

The chain is but an extension of the Alleghanies, and runs north-east, and south-west.

It was near sunset when I got to the top of the mountain. Below me, and as far as I could see, lay a wide, illimitable ocean of verdure, (dotted at wide intervals with farms recently opened,) in some places sinking into long and deep furrows, in others rising almost into mountains. The tree tops seemed to be so interlaced as to make an unbroken mass—all covered with the rank luxuriance of a western forest,—and through this the Tennessee River flowed in wide sweeping curves, like a broad, bright stream of melted silver.

A cloud, charged with lightning and rain, came sweeping along from the south-west, and blackened the landscape with its shadow. But it passed rapidly away, and the wind threw the whole mass of verdure into great billows of emerald, which were dashed by the light of the declining sun with an atmosphere of crimson and gold, while the rain drops sparkled upon every leaf, and fell in showers of diamonds. The rain cloud swept along to the north-east; at one moment a black mass, with a rainbow on its southern edge, at the next, (as the lightning flashed over it,) a mountain of burnished gold floating in the air.

Another cloud crossed the face of the sun and darkened the scene, and then all its craggy points and mountain heights, and pinnacles were edged by the sunlight behind it, with narrow fringes of gold.

The mass became thinner, and the glorious golden fringes melted and faded away, and the cloud changed into crimson and gold, and flame.

The sun touched the horizon and the cloud rolled apart, and turned into a long and wide vista, like some pass between great mountains, which tower from earth to heaven, now flashing with gold and crimson, and scarlet and grey, and purple, leading to the sun.

The vista seemed a fit avenue for a host of angels and archangels, clothed with sunlight with harps of gold in their hands, and crowns of olive leaves upon their heads, to march with burning feet over a path paved with gold and sunlight, from heaven to earth.

I gazed till I half imagined I could see the stately procession moving, and hear the rich music of their evening song. I did hear music; but it came from a flute at the base of the mountain, and so far away, that its soft notes, made still softer by the distance and the pure mountain air, fell upon my ear with delicious sweetness. I was surprised at hearing such music deep in the heart of the wilderness, and as the place from which it came lay in my way, I determined to find the musician as I returned to my home.

I descended on foot, leading my horse, and after a walk through darkness, lighted only by a few stars, the rays of which hardly penetrated the thick foliage above me, I reached the base of the mountain, and the wider and better way that ran along it. Still guided by the music, I rode on, until it ceased; but now lights, from a multitude of camp fires, were distinctly seen. I soon reached the place, and found it an encampment of Cherokee Indians. I believe that I have already informed you their home lies only a few miles east of my dwelling, and extends half across the State of

Georgia. It is one of the most powerful and intelligent tribes in North America. I was hailed by a sentinel when I came near their encampment, and after I had stated that I was a benighted traveler, he called another Indian who guided me to the hut of the chief.

As I alighted from my horse, the chief came, and extending his hand, gave me a hearty welcome. I told him my name, and was surprised to find that he not only had heard of me, but knew a great deal of my history, character, and pursuits. I was still more surprised to find that my host was the musician, whose flute had drawn me to his hut, and that he is a well educated man.

His name is Gray Eagle; he is a young chief of the tribe. He promised to return my visit, and upon my asking in what manner I could be of service to him, he inquired for a book which he named. I was sorry to say that I had not the book; but, after reflecting a moment, I remembered to have seen a copy in the library of my neighbor, Mr. Norton. I informed him, he thanked me, and bade me call soon again. The whole incident was so pleasant, that my ride home was joyful and happy. But when I arrived there, my dear sister, I found all the servants in a state of great consternation. You, no doubt, remember Thomas Jinks, my coachman in England, who came with me to America. He, it seems, had given offense to some of the peasantry in my neighborhood, by performing the same offices for me here, which he did in England. This, according to their rude notions, is disgraceful to a white man. * * *

The rest of the letter contains a statement of the matter detailed in the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

A PLANTER was moving with a company of slaves from the neighborhood of Charleston to Tennessee, and Norton committed Huldah to his care. She was to be taken to a tavern in Norton's neighborhood, at which the planter would stop on his journey, and a message was to be sent by which Norton would be duly advised of her arrival.

He then started on his journey home. After he got there, he called up a negro, who was his favorite, and said: "Abe, I've promised to buy you a wife, and I bought one in Charleston; she will be here in ten or twelve days."

Abe was about forty years of age; a thick, heavy set negro man, with coarse, hard features, and arms that extended nearly to his feet.

"Thankee, masser," said Abe, "what kind of a gal is she?"

"She is beautiful, Abe, almost white. The prettiest girl you ever saw."

"Thankee, masser, but I don't like white gals, or them as is partly white, and as for pretty, why, pretty is as pretty does. You know, masser. Ha! ha!"

"Oh, Abe, you are old enough, and strong enough to make her behave herself. If you will be a good husband, I'll go her security she will be a good wife."

"I is stronger than her, masser. No doubt of that; but masser know it's not the strength of a woman, 'tis

her tongue that plays the mischief. 'Ef masser will only get me one as can't talk, that will suit me. I don't like talking gals. They talk sweet sometimes, and sometimes they talk sour and then they talk bitter. It's that that breaks my heart, masser. 'Ef this wife you've bought for me will only talk good all the time, and behave herself, she'll suit me. I aint got much prejudice agin' color; I'se 'bove that. I'm willin' to marry a white woman, 'ef she'll only behave herself; but I's a little afeard to trust 'em."

"Why, Abe, you saucy scamp, how dare you talk so?"

"Masser knows the last wife I had was Kitty. She was half white and half black, and I knows she was half devil and half woman, and I was mighty glad when masser sold her two weeks afore he went to Charleston. I's had three wives. One black; she was pretty good. I got 'long with her jist so. Then masser moved out here, and I left her in North Carolina. Then I married Slome. She was most white, and all devil. Then her masser sold her. Then I married Kitty—half white—half black—half devil—half woman. Masser, I'm afeered of this one. I aint got a bit of prejudice agin' color, but I don't like these women that has prejudice agin' my color; it always makes me miserable."

"Well, Abe, don't grieve; if you don't like her, there are two or three men on the place who have no wives. You have the first choice, because I had to sell your wife, and promised you another. If you don't like her, you need not take her—that's all."

"Well, masser, I'll take a look at the creeter when she comes."

In a few days Huldah came. She was weary and

sad, and lonely. The slaves on the plantation gathered around her in the evening after their return from labor. The women pitied her, and one of them, at the command of Norton, took her to her cabin as an inmate.

In a few days her sorrows wore off, and it was discovered that she could read and write. The tidings of these great accomplishments were quickly carried to the dwelling-house, and Mrs. Mills, the overseer's wife, was duly informed of it. She summoned Huldah to her presence, and placed a book in her hand. Huldah read slowly, and made a great many blunders; but she could read.

"Why, whar in the world did you learn to read?" said Mrs. Mills.

"I learnt it in old Virginny. We, that is, mother and me, and the rest of us, lived in a cabin half a mile from our master's house, and a white man came and give me lessons, and I learnt to write too, mam," said Huldah, with some show of pride.

"Well, I'm mighty glad of it, Huldah—not that I 'prove of colored people learning to read and write. I don't; it spoils them, and makes them saucy, so that they won't work; but I'm glad you can read, for I want some one to read to me. My eyes are getting weak, and you must come and be my maid, and read a little to me every day."

"Thankee, mam," said Huldah, making a low courtesy, "I'll do my best to please you."

The next day Huldah was duly installed in her new office. Mrs. Mills sat on an old settee, covered with a hide which had been tanned with the hair on, while Huldah read to her, at first slowly, and with many errors; but she improved by degrees, till Mrs. Mills

declared that Huldah was the best reader in the whole world.

About a week after his last conversation with Abe, Norton met him in the field as he was coming from his work.

"Well, Abe," said Norton, "how do you prosper in your courtship? When will the wedding come off?"

"Ah, masser Ned, the day is not sot yet."

"Why, what is the matter? Don't you like her?"

"Masser, I's been looking at that girl. I's viewed her tentively; first I looked at her with one eye shut, and then with tother shut, and then with both eyes open, and I's come 'liberately to the conclusion, that bein' as masser Ned wants me to marry her, and bein' as she is young and pretty good looking, and bein' as all my other wives has been sold off, and bein' as masser gwine security for her good behavior, and bein' as masser Ned has bought her at a big price on purpose for Abe—why, I'll take her, jist to oblige masser."

"Well, Abe, you are a gallant fellow, and I suppose I ought to be very grateful for your kindness. You are to have the prettiest girl within fifty miles for your wife, and you take her only as a favor to me. But, Abe, how do you prosper in your courtship?"

"Courtship! Masser Ned; Abe don't court; he holds himself 'bove that; he's too smart and too old for that. Masser Ned let me tell you something as will do you good to larn. You're thirty years old, and aint married yet. I's had three wives, and could have had a dozen if I would take 'em. I's made the study of women my 'ticular business, and the 'clusion I's come to, is they're queer and goes by contraries. 'Ef you go talking softly to the farr sex, they likes it so well, that

they 'll keep you at it as long as they can. And they 'll put you off from one day to the next; that may be a whole month will pass before they say—'Yes.' Now, masser, that 's all nonsense. A man as knows what he 's about, won 't submit to it. It 's trifling with his feelings and his principles. My way is, masser, jist to go to the gal and say, 'Here I am. Here 's — Abe ready to marry you to-day or to-morrow—'ef you want me say yes, and have no foolin ' about it, and 'ef you don 't say yes now, you needn 't never come whinin ' and whimperin ' arter me, kase it will be no use. Now 's your time—now or never. 'Ef young masser would do so with Miss Harriet over thar—pointing with his thumb over his shoulder—Mrs. Mills wouldn 't be mistress of this house long, and Miss Harriet would be thar in her place."

"Well, Abe, I see that you are a philosopher and know what you are about. You understand these things better than I do. Have you talked to Huldah?"

"No, masser, I 's 'tempted it three times, but she runs 'way as soon as I begins. Old Martha is an enemy of mine, and I 'spect has been talkin ' agin me; but I don 't mean to give it up so. I 'll ketch her some day and hold her till she hears me through."

The next day, early in the morning, a great outcry was heard in the yard, and looking out of a window, Mrs. Mills and Norton saw Huldah fighting with Abe. Her hair was flowing about her neck, and streams of blood were running down her cheeks. She was crying and screaming, and springing upon Abe—springing at him with the energy of a wild cat. Her hands fell fast and furiously upon him, while he bent and received the blows in a stooping posture upon his shoulders and the

back of his head. She was so furious and so earnestly engaged, that she did not heed the commands both of Norton and Mrs. Mills to desist. After she had beaten him till she was breathless, she turned her head and saw them. Still furious, she cried out to Norton, "The old ugly brute tried to kiss me."

"Huldah," said Mrs. Mills, "we can't have such conduct here. You must not fight."

"The old ugly beast tried to kiss me," said Huldah. "He won't let me alone. He keeps following about after me to talk to me, and I don't mean to hear him say one word. All I want of him is to let me alone."

"Huldah," said Norton, "go wash the blood from your face, and put on another dress. The one you have on is all torn, and come into the parlor."

Huldah did so. Norton and Mrs. Mills were sitting in the room.

"Huldah," said Norton, "you must not and shall not fight your fellow servants. It's an outrage that I will not permit on this plantation."

"I won't fight any of 'em, massa, if they will let me alone. I never disturbed Abe, nor said one word to him. It's him that began it. He's to blame, not me."

"Huldah, Abe wants to marry you."

"Marry me, master, I know he do. But Aunt Martha says he's a bad man. He's had three wives, and called 'em devils, and other bad names, and whipped 'em almost every day. Aunt Martha has known him since he was a little boy. He whipped his own old mother with a stick. He's an old brute, and needn't be asking me to marry him, for I won't do it."

"Huldah," said Norton, sharply, "Huldah I'll have no such words here. Don't tell me you wont."

"I did not mean to tell massa, I wont. I meant to say so to Abe."

"Huldah, I bought you for Abe."

"Master I can't marry him. I's rather die than do so. I hates him. I wont have him," said Huldah, screaming and stamping her foot upon the floor, and bursting into tears. "I'll die before I'll have him."

"You *shall* marry him. You shall marry him. I'll let you know who's master on this plantation. At first I was half jesting about this thing. Now, since my authority is disputed, you shall see who is your master. It is nothing to me whether you marry Abe or some one else; but it is something to me whether I am to be obeyed or not. You *shall* marry him. Old Father Blowhard, the Methodist circuit rider, will be here in a few weeks, and then you shall marry him. It shall be no jumping the broomstick wedding; but a real one before a white minister that will make you husband and wife till one of you dies or is sold. Do you hear that?"

"Yes, master," said Huldah, who was standing before him, pale as death, her thin lips tightly compressed, her little hands clenched and hanging at her side.

"The sooner you know it the better. I'll pardon you now for the outrage you have committed, by fighting close by the house. Go and make up your mind that Abe is to be your husband, and treat him well, and he will treat you well. His other wives were not good to him, and so he beat them. As to that affair with his mother, I know nothing about it; but Martha is an enemy of Abe's, and you must not believe every thing she says."

Huldah left the room. As soon as she had gone so far that Norton and Mrs. Mills could not hear her, she breathed half aloud through her thin tightly compressed lips—"Marry Abe! Marry Abe! No, never; I'll die first." She threw her clenched hands forward, and spoke out with energy: "No, I'll die before I will marry him."

Late in the evening of the same day, Huldah went to Martha's cabin, and told her all that had taken place.

"What shall I do, Aunt Martha? Do tell me how to get rid of Abe. Can't you go and coax him to let me alone?"

"It's no use, Huldah. He will do just as master Ned tells him, and now as master Ned has said you shall marry him, it can't be helped. You's got to mind your master, child, and do whatever he tells you."

"But, Aunt Martha, it's no use to try. I can't marry that mean, ugly, dirty old brute. How can I love him when I hates him."

"It's no use talkin', child. You've got to marry him, cause master Ned say so. If you love him or if you hate him, it's all one to master Ned. It's only worse for you."

"But, Aunt Martha," said Huldah, bursting into tears, and bending her face into her lap, "what can I do? Must a poor child like me marry an old wretch that I hates."

"Thar's no help, child; you'r master Ned's slave, and must do what he tells you."

"I *wont* obey him," said Huldah, springing to her feet. "I'll die first," and as she said this, she stamped her little feet fiercely on the floor.

“It’s no use crying, child, nor taking on, you can’t help yourself. You’re a slave and must do as your master orders you, whether you like it or not.”

“If you can’t tell me what to do, is there nobody else who can? I tell you I’ll die before I’ll marry that old wretch, whether master orders me or not. I wont obey him. He can’t make me do it, and he shall not.”

“Child,” said Martha, “it ‘pears to me you don’t know how ‘tis; you’re a slave, Huldah. You’re master Ned’s property, same as his horses and sheep. You got no right to say ‘wont’ and ‘will.’ He ‘wonts’ and he ‘wills.’ All you can do is to mind what he tell you. If he tell you marry Abe, you must marry Abe. If he sell Abe and tell you marry somebody else, you must. If you don’t marry Abe, you’ll be whipped, and then have to marry him. It’s so wid all of us. You is no worse off than all the rest of us colored people.”

Huldah sat and listened with glaring eyes, as Martha said this. She then threw herself on the floor, and rolled over in the dust.

“Can I do any thing? Have I no right to say who I shall love, and who I wont love?”

“No!” said Martha. “None, unless master allows you. You’re his, I tell’s you. He’s bought you and paid for you. You’re his, not your own. You’re a slave—not free—and you can’t do as if you was free. You’d better talk to uncle Isham ‘bout this, Huldah, bein’ as your so set in your way.”

“Who is uncle Isham? and where is he?”

“Uncle Isham is a free man, and a doctor. He goes about the country with a basket on his arm, full of roots and herbs. All we colored people goes to him when we’re in trouble. He is a conjuror and a fortune

teller. He 'll be here to-morrow night to see Sally who is sick, and give her some medicine. You can see him then."

Isham came the next evening, and Martha and Huldah told him all Huldah's troubles.

The old man held down his head, and sat for a few minutes in deep thought. He then got up and took his basket on his arm.

"What, you aint a gwine away, uncle Isham, without tellin' the child what to do, is you?"

"Yes. I 'll tell her jist this, not to make herself oneasy, for she aint a gwine to marry Abe. I sees that well enough."

"But how is the child to help herself, uncle Isham," said Martha.

"That 's not for you to know. She 'll be helped, and soon enough, too, if she 'll only keep her eyes open." So saying he went away.

Huldah half believed the declarations of Isham. An hour before she saw him, she was in an agony of grief. Now her fears ~~were~~ was more than half gone. She was less bitter toward Abe than she had been before, and resumed, with tolerable composure, her labor in the household, and when that was over, her task of reading to Mrs. Mills.

Norton had a few books. At first Huldah read slowly, and made a great many mistakes, but, with the aid of Mrs. Mills, she improved and became a good reader.

The stock of novels and poetry were soon exhausted, and, as they were too far from places where new books could readily be had, they were compelled either to stop reading or to attack the histories. Translations of

Livy and Tacitus were next read, and then histories of England and America.

Mrs. Mills' thirst for knowledge increased; at the first it was only the craving of listlessness, now it became a steady pursuit and a passion. Huldah's mind was awakened, and the hours seemed too few in which she could sit and read to her mistress.

Norton was often absent, and when he was at home, the necessary attention to his business occupied his time.

Huldah's imagination teemed with the high and romantic stories of other times, until she felt almost that she was a heroine, and that within her own bosom, a fire slumbered, which would, at last, burst forth and fill the world with its blaze.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FEW days afterward as Mrs. Mills was lying half asleep upon the settee, and Huldah was slowly reading, half aloud, rather to herself than her mistress, a gentle knock was heard at the door, and Gray Eagle entered their apartment.

He was young and graceful. He wore on his head a cap made of blue silk velvet, with a large gold star in front, and over it floated gracefully a cluster of white ostrich feathers. His person was wrapped in a blue blanket, and his feet covered with moccasins. He had a large bow on his left arm, and a quiver filled with arrows hung upon his shoulder.

Mrs. Mills and Huldah were surprised, but not alarmed. Many Indians had visited their dwelling, and they looked upon them merely as neighbors. He bowed gracefully, and inquired for Mr. Norton.

He was told that Norton was at a distant part of the plantation, but would probably ride home in an hour, and was invited to take a seat. He did so; they were in the library. He looked around on the shelves, and presently rose, and asked permission to examine the books. He conversed with Mrs. Mills about their contents, and soon showed that he was familiar with them. The hour flew rapidly past, and yet Norton had not returned; another and another hour flew by, until the setting sun tinged the windows of the room with his crimson beams. A servant, who had returned from the

field, was called, and he informed them that Norton had gone upon some errand to a neighboring village, and would not return that night.

Gray Eagle was invited to remain to supper, but he declined the invitation and took leave, not, however, until he had said that he would soon call again, and hoped to find Mr. Norton at home.

As he walked home through the dark forest—now lighted only by the stars—he could not but think of the beautiful girl he had seen at Norton's. He had seen civilized life, and despised it. He had seen beauty and wealth, and fashion and learning, and taste, but he had chosen—deliberately chosen—to wander through the forest as his fathers for ages had wandered, and to enjoy the dignity and freedom of his position, as a hereditary chief of his tribe, and as a Cherokee. Still, as he walked along his gloomy, starlit path, under great trees that had sheltered his tribe for ages, he thought of the slight and graceful figure, and the large, lustrous black eyes of Huldah. He reached his tent, and without telling where he had been, or whom he had seen, laid down upon his bed of buffalo skins to dream—to dream, not of books, nor of the chase, nor of his cares as a chief of his tribe—but of Huldah.

Huldah had now been two months at Norton's. The visit of Gray Eagle was a new event in her life. The gracefulness of his person, the beauty of his face, which beamed with intelligence, and had stamped upon it the air of one born to command; his easy and elegant manners, his respectful deportment to Mrs. Mills, and his silent deference toward herself, all were objects of profound interest to her.

Even his nodding plumes and his bow and arrows,

and his black hair hanging upon his shoulders, appealed to her imagination. He did not seem a stranger to her. She thought she had seen him before in that very costume, and wondered if it were a reality or but a dream. She thought of all the heroes of history, or of romance of whom she had read, and found that the young chief, in some respects, bore some resemblance to each one of them, whom she held in the highest esteem.

But why need she care for him? He came, and was gone; as a beautiful dream comes in the night and fades away in the morning.

He said he would return—would soon return—and he looked at *her* as he said so. He talked to Mrs. Mills, but looked at Huldah as he was talking. He talked of old stories of which she had read, and they seemed more interesting, instructive and beautiful since he had spoken of them. He pointed out some books in the library as particularly interesting, and she determined to read them again without delay. Every book upon which he put his hand, now seemed to have a greater value, and those which he had passed without notice, seemed to her unworthy of attention. But what was he to her? She was a slave. He was free; and the proud chief of an ancient tribe. A thousand warriors obeyed his call, and marshalled themselves for battle at his command. Why should such a friendless outcast as Huldah—a poor slave—the property of Mr. Norton—the servant of Mrs. Mills—the destined wife of old Abe—think for a moment of the gallant young chief of the Cherokees?

But still she thought of him.

The whole current of her life was changed. She dressed each day with greater care. Her step was

more stately; and her eye glowed with greater brightness than before. She had passed from the dull, grey cloud which had encompassed her, into bright sunshine. Every object and person now, that passed before her, was seen and received its due share of attention. Her cheeks glowed with fresh bloom—the dull dream of her former life was gone—was gone forever. She no longer feared that she would be made the wife of Abe. She hardly thought of him for a minute, and when she saw him, or when in his absence she thought of him, it was with a lip of scorn. She—to marry that poor creature, to live with him as his wife—she felt—she knew it was impossible. Her heart beat at each knock upon the door, and her eye watched its opening.

What was the matter with Huldah?

All her domestic duties were discharged with greater care than they had ever been before. Mrs. Mills noticed the change, and praised her for her increased activity and carefulness—but she saw no more.

What was the matter with Huldah?

She could not tell; all that she knew was, that life had now a purpose and an object. Existence was delightful—the sun shone brighter to her view, the trees were greener; the stars more glorious, and all nature was full of that exquisite poetry and romance, which before she had found only in books; and now these books, with their rich treasures of knowledge, and of wisdom, were opened to her heart. Shakspeare wrote not of the past only, but of the present; his scenes were all around her glowing with the warmth and fire of living, and burning and loving beauty.

What was the matter with Huldah?

Nothing—nothing. She was happier now than she

had ever been before, her step was firmer, and her whole being full of luxuriant life, and blooming health.

In two days Grey Eagle returned.

Norton was at home and received him courteously. Except by his costume, he did not differ from well educated white men. Their conversation was general; principally, however, upon topics in which Grey Eagle and his tribe had an especial interest. Huldah sat silently in the room. He did not look at her. She busied herself a part of the time in preparations for supper. The table was set in the room in which Grey Eagle and Norton and Mrs. Mills were conversing. Huldah quietly placed the plates upon it, and waited upon the guests at the meal. Still Grey Eagle did not appear even to see her. When he was about to depart, he went with Norton to the side of the room which was covered with books, and selected from the library one, and but one book which he said he would soon return. While he was standing talking to Norton, Huldah became conscious that he was looking at her; she raised her eyes and saw him put a piece of paper in a book, which he quietly replaced in the library. It was done so stealthily and so adroitly, that no one but Huldah saw the act; he gave another look at Huldah, as he took his leave, searching and piercing—such as she had never encountered—and was gone.

The family sat in the room until night. Huldah sat restlessly, but never even looked toward the part of the room where the library was. At last, and late at night, Mr. Norton and Mr. Mills went to their several apartments. Mrs. Mills sat longer, much longer, as Huldah thought, than she had ever sat before. She had

taken a long nap after dinner that day, and now was entertaining Huldah with old stories of Indian cruelty and treachery. She told her a story, which she had often told her before, of a great battle in which her father had been engaged with the Indians, and how cruel the savages had been to the prisoners. The good lady, warmed with her subject and each tale of horror, reminded her of another and another, until Huldah was informed of half the cruelties that Indians had perpetrated upon the whites. At length Mrs. Mills yawned, and prepared to retire. She took a candle in her hand, and when she got to the door that led to her apartment, she returned; "There's one thing more, Huldah, that I want to tell you. I believe I have never told you of Crawford's defeat, and how the Indians fastened him to a stake and burnt him to death. Sit down and I'll tell you the whole story now, for fear I may never again remember to tell it to you."

Huldah took her seat, and Mrs. Mills began; but, before she got far into her narrative, she said: "Put me in mind of it to-morrow, and I'll tell you the whole tale."

As soon as she left the room, the book was opened and the slip of paper was in Huldah's bosom. She took a candle and went with a quick, light step to her apartment. She first cautiously fastened the door and looked around the room, and then, with a trembling hand, opened the note.

It contained but four words, written in pencil—"Be awake at midnight." Her room was on the ground floor, and one of its windows opened out upon a lawn by the side of the house. She read the note again and again, placed it in her bosom and sat down. It was nearly

midnight. Why should she sit there at the bidding of Grey Eagle? What did he want with her?

He did not look at her, nor speak to her, although he was in the room where she was for hours.

But still she sat until she became weary and impatient. At length she heard a branch of the Cinnamon Rose bush, which shaded the window, move against the glass. It had often done so before. Always when the wind blew hard, that branch rubbed upon the window.

It moved again. She rose from her seat and went near the window. It was a starlight night, but she could see no person. The branch again brushed against the window, and she gently tapped upon the glass. A hand rested on the window sill for an instant, and was removed.

Huldah heard no footsteps—saw nothing more; and waited again for half an hour. All was still. She looked more closely and saw something laying on the window sill; cautiously opening the window, she found a letter, but it was too dark to read it, and to relight her candle, might occasion inquiry. She carefully hid the letter, and retired, but neither to sleep—nor to rest.

What was there—she thought—in the letter which required so much secrecy in its delivery? Why did Grey Eagle write to her? What interest had he in her fate or she in his?

The morning light seemed to linger. The hours passed heavily away. The wind blew in great gusts and the bough of the rose bush dashed heavily against the glass. She looked out—no person was there. Thick, black clouds floated slowly across the sky, and

the rain storm set in, and so the long, sleepless and weary night passed away.

As soon as she could discern the dawn, she was seated at the window. The struggling light, at length, enabled her to see distinctly, and with trembling heart, she read the letter.

CHAPTER IX.

"Huldah," said Mrs. Mills, "what ails you to-day? You don't seem to understand a word of what you are reading. I took notice of you this morning, as you were setting the table; you appeared to be thinking all the time of something else."

"I am very well, Madam."

"O, I am sure your health is as good as it ever was, but still something appears to be the matter with you. You have some great weight on your mind. Lay down that book and tell me what you have been reading about for half an hour."

"Ma'm!"

"You have been reading aloud to me for an hour. I want you to put the book down and tell me what you have been reading about."

"I have been reading about Queen Elizabeth, Ma'm."

"What have you read about her?"

"Don't know, Ma'm. I was reading for you, not for myself."

"Huldah, what have you been thinking of?"

"I was thinking of the Indians you told me about; how cruel they are, and what a great many white people they have killed, and about their burning Crawford at the stake."

"Well, Huldah, that does account for your inattention to what you were reading. But I did not tell you those things to scare you. You need not be afraid of

the Cherokees; they are friendly Indians, you know, and will protect us if need be."

"Yes, Ma'm."

"That handsome young Chief who was here yesterday, would no more hurt you than any white gentleman would."

"No, Ma'm."

Huldah was greatly surprised, and as greatly disappointed by the contents of the letter which she had carried so warmly in her bosom, and opened to read with such trembling eagerness. It was—

"Huldah, you must be free. You shall not marry Abe. You must come to Grey Eagle's camp, and will be free while you are there. But Grey Eagle is a Chief, and must be obeyed. Three nights from now it will rain again in the night. You must get out of your window and come down to the gate at midnight, and an Indian guide will be there to take you to a good hiding place. Burn this as soon as you read it and obey."

Huldah twisted the letter and lighted the fire with it. So far she had followed his command. But why should she venture to a camp of savages? What claim had Grey Eagle upon her that he should command her to obey him? Her curiosity was greatly excited. Why did he wish her rather than any other of the slaves to escape? He must have some reason for his choice, and poor Huldah could think of but one, and that was he loved her. At one time she thought she would tell Mrs. Mills all about it; at other times she thought she would talk the whole matter over with old Martha, and would take her advice. But the direction to burn the letter as soon as she read it, implied that

its contents were to be secret, and if she asked advice, she might be betrayed.

The first and second day wore away, and the third day came in unclouded beauty.

There was no appearance of the predicted rain, and unless it did rain, she was not invited to leave the house.

Night came, and Huldah went out and looked up at the sky; hosts of brilliant stars shone down upon the silent, sleeping earth. She retired to her room, and laid upon her little bed. Hours seemed to have passed away, and she looked out of the window, and the stars still shone in cloudless beauty. All was calm and sweet, and silent. She again laid down and fell into a troubled slumber, from which she was awakened by gusts of wind, and the moving of the rose bush across the panes of glass, and the gentle falling of the rain upon the roof, and against the window.

Grey Eagle, she thought, was surely a prophet. How could he know that it would rain that night. But he said it would, and it was raining: He said, too, she would be free, and she always thought that it would be a nice thing to be free, and do as she pleased. He said she should not be the wife of Abe. She sat by the window and the rain came down, dashed by the wind against the house. The clock struck eleven.

Still the rain increased; what should she do? She thought over the tales Mrs. Mills had told her of the cruelty of the savages. She thought of Abe and shuddered. She thought of the cruelties of which she had read. Would they be kinder to her than Mrs. Mills was? And then she thought of freedom—a whole

lifetime of freedom. Why did Grey Eagle wish her to escape rather than others? He must love her; and then she thought of his tall and graceful figure, and of his nodding plumes and proud air of command, and how happy his wife would be to wander by his side in the woods, while he chased the wild deer.

Poetry and romance, curiosity and love, the natural love for freedom, and her half love for Grey Eagle, were on one side, and on the other—what? Slavery for life, which might be heavier as she grew older, but never lighter than it then was. To live the slave of Norton and the wife of Abe.

She cautiously opened the window—the rain still poured down in torrents—and the wind swept through the great black trees, half bending them to the earth. She took a little bundle in her hand, and stood for a moment in the tempest, and then almost flew down the path that led to the gate. She stood still when she got there, it was too dark to see any object, however near it might be. She stood until her clothes were dripping with the rain, and still no person came. She half resolved to go back, when a sudden flash of lightning made all around her bright for an instant, and all was then dark, and then a cold hand was laid upon her shoulder. "Come!" She shrunk from his touch, but the guide placed a rope in her hand. "Come!" and she followed her unknown and silent guide through the rain and the storm, wading brooks that were swollen and deep; now winding along the steep side of some mountain; now groping through tickets that seemed to be pathless; now following a well beaten road, and now wading for hours along the course of some stream over

slippery rocks, and amid waters that seemed every moment as if they would sweep her away by their power.

The storm abated for awhile, and the bright, blue sky above her was studded with stars. The guide quickened his pace, and Huldah already weary, could, with difficulty, follow him. She still grasped the rope, and was half pulled along.

At length they came to a thick wood, covered with trees which had been blown down by some tornado, and Huldah was taken into the midst of it, and told to sit down and be still. "Don't move," said her guide; "be still," and he went away.

The storm came on again with renewed fury, and the tall trees bent and cracked, and crashed before it. Great trees were torn up by their roots, and others broken off, and the rain still fell in torrents.

Chilled, and cold, and weary, and alone in darkness, except when flashes of lightning showed with fiery distinctness the whole scene, in all its gloomy terror around her, she crouched and drew a wet shawl over her shoulders, and tried to sleep; but the roar of the thunder and of the tornado, and the crash of falling trees, forbade it.

The day began at last to dawn, and the gray clouds fled in haste away, pursuing each other over the sky, until at last no trace of the tempest was seen, except where the earth was strewn with its wrecks.

Huldah was still seated in obedience to the command of her guide. Suddenly, as if he had risen from the earth, or dropped from the skies, Grey Eagle was at her side. She heard no footsteps or other sounds of his approach; he came so quietly upon her through the

tangled thicket, and over fallen trees, and through pools of water that she could hardly believe her senses, when he stood beside her.

“Do you want to be free, Huldah?”

“Yes!” and after a pause, “Yes, master.”

“You shall be free. I am not your master. Will you marry Abe?”

“No; never, never. I’ll die first.”

“Where is your father?”

“My father!”

“Yes! where is he?”

“He’s in Virginia, I believe; he was thar when we was sold? He lived not far from us, and often came to our house, to see us.”

“You have obeyed me so far, and whether you will be safe or not, will depend upon yourself. My plans are well laid, but they may not succeed unless you follow them.”

“I will do so. What must I do?”

“You must do one thing at a time, and ask no questions. Follow me.”

He led the way through bent, and tangled shrubs and bushes, over old trees, some of which had been blown down so long, that they were half decayed, and over others, that the recent storm had torn up by their roots; till they came to the side of a hill where dim traces of a path could be seen; and then directed her to go before him. He followed her and carefully concealed all signs of her footsteps, and thus they went on for miles, until the wearied girl was ready to sink to the earth. He then went before her, and led her by a mazy winding course. Sometimes taking the bed of a small brook, which they waded up for a mile; at other times

crossing and recrossing it. They came to a hut in the woods, surrounded by bushes, so thickly, that it could not be seen, until the party was close to it. They went in, and Huldah was seated upon the damp ground. Grey Eagle kindled a fire, and broiled some venison for her breakfast. The sun shone brightly and Huldah was soon comfortable and warm.

Grey Eagle told her that he would come and see her again in the afternoon. Huldah made a seat in the hut upon which she sat, and slept and was rested. With the afternoon came Grey Eagle—punctual to his appointment. He was accompanied by two Indians—both of them young persons—whom Huldah soon found were husband and wife; the woman brought a bundle in her hand.

“Do you want to be free, Huldah?” again said Grey Eagle.

“Yes;” and a pause, “Yes, sir.”

“Do you want to see your father?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Follow my directions, then, and you will be free, and will live with your father.” He sat on the ground before her, laid aside his cap, and threw his long, black hair over his shoulders. “This woman has brought for you Indian clothing. You are to be an Indian, and one of our tribe. We will leave the hut, and when we come back, I will see an Indian girl.”

The men then left the hut and after a short absence, came back, and found Huldah arrayed from head to foot in Indian costume. Moccasins, blanket, and beads, with a bow in her hand, and a quiver full of arrows at her back.

Grey Eagle smiled as he looked at her, and his

companion said, "she good Indian now; one real Cherokee." Grey Eagle burnt all the clothing that Huldah brought with her, and stood by the fire till the last vestige of them was utterly consumed.

He then conversed with the man and woman in the Cherokee language, and often, while doing so, pointed to the earth.

After their conference, he told Huldah that those persons were now her brother and sister, and that all the Cherokees were either brothers and sisters, or fathers and mothers to Huldah. That she should go two days journey with them to the north-east, to another part of the country inhabited by their tribe, and would there find a home, and freedom. "I will see you in one moon," said Grey Eagle, and then, without bidding her good-by, or saying a word to herself, or to her companions, he walked away.

Huldah and her two friends remained at the hut until night. They then started on their journey. The man walked before them, his wife followed closely behind, and Huldah followed her. They walked on in silence. Their course was almost in a straight line, except that now and then, some creek or a steep hill, induced their leader to turn aside for awhile, but afterward he would again go on in the same direction. The man never changed his pace, and never stopped until day-break, when they turned aside and found shelter and refreshment for the day, in a deep glen which was half hid by tall bushes and shrubs.

At dark the next night they resumed their monotonous journey, and soon reached the place to which they were sent.

It was a great encampment of Cherokee Indians in

the middle of large fields in which was cultivated corn, and wheat, and tobacco, and filled with horses, swine, and cattle.

Her guides conducted her to a hut, the only occupant of which was an old Indian woman, and said to Huldah: "This is your home, and this woman is your mother—your Indian mother."

CHAPTER X.

Early the next morning it was discovered that Hul-dah had fled. But whither? No trace could be seen of her, except the open window, two broken branches of the rose bush, and the deep imprint of her shoe below the window, as she alighted on the ground. The hard rain had obliterated all other marks. Search was made in the out-houses and even in the woods.

"It makes no difference," said Norton, "she will stay away until she gets hungry and then come home."

But after five day's delay as she did not return, Norton entered upon a more diligent and earnest search. He knew that Grey Eagle had been at his house, but he also learned that for three days before Huldah fled, Grey Eagle had been absent on an excursion to part of his tribe, fifty miles from his own encampment. Spies were sent into the Indian country under the pretence of trading for skins and venison, but they neither saw nor heard of any person who at all resembled Huldah. The search was abandoned at last as hopeless, and Norton bit his lips in angry silence. He attributed her flight to her hatred of Abe, and was not at all pleased when he learned that at the very time Abe intended to marry Huldah he had a wife who was a slave of one of his neighbors.

"How is it, Abe," said Norton, "that you agreed to marry that girl when you have one wife already?"

"Massa, the way of it is jist this,—I'se got one wife, sure 'nuff, but she's sickly, and will die soon. She can't live longer than the next fall of the leaves, you see, and so I agreed to take this gal now to be sure to get her; cause if I didn't, why Massa would gin her away to big Ben, and then I'de have no chance to please Massa by marryin' her. Hannah, that's my wife now, might die any time, cause she's mighty poorly, and then I'de be in a nice fix. I know'd Massa Ned would'n't care.

"Well, Abe, Huldah has run away. If you will find her so that I can get her, I'll give you two silver dollars, which is more money than you ever had at any one time in all your life."

"Trust Abe for dat, Massa. I'll find her, 'cause you see, she's slighted me, and Abe don't like to be slighted, 'specially by the ~~far~~ sex. I'll find her for you. Them two dollars is as good as if dey was in my pocket now. She not far off, you may be sure of dat, 'cause she's stranger in these parts, and none of the people off of this plantation has ever seen her. She is not got many friends, and arter awhile when she's laid out in the woods till she gits scared and half starved, she'll be glad enough to came home and get Massa Ned to take her back agin. Old Martha, you know, runned off and stayed in de woods and swamps six months, and at last come limpin' home, and said if Massa would'n't whip her, she never would run away agin. That was afore we moved out here—way off in North Carolina, whar we cum from, and so it will be wid dis gal. Never fear, Massa, Abe will get two dollars and a new wife; old one most dead now.

"Well, Abe, keep a good look out, and as soon as you hear any news of her let me know."

"Trust Abe for that, Massa. He'll keep both eyes open for ten years but what he'll find her. He lay low and keep dark, Massa Ned."

Mrs. Mills was sure that Huldah was not with the Indians.

"Why," said she, "she was so frightened at the old tales of the Indians I told her, that I am certain she never would dare to go nigh them. It was lucky, indeed, that I hapened to be talking about such things just at that time. Mr. Norton, if you will tell all the servants that Huldah is not to be Abe's wife, she will get to hear it in some way, and will come back pretty soon, I am sure. I never saw a girl hate a person more bitterly than Huldah hated Abe. She trembled and turned pale at the bare mention of his name, and one night—the night after you told her she *should* marry Abe,—I really feared she would go into spasms. She seemed half distracted; but I talked to her and soothed her, and she got better till at last, as nothing was said about it in the house, I think she half forgot the whole affair, and never looked better and happier than she did on the very day before she ran away. I wish she would come home, for she's a smart, active, good girl, and I like her very much indeed."

"I will make no such declaration," said Norton. "No slave on the plantation shall say 'I *won't*' to me. I will make an example of her. It is essential to the discipline of the place. A man can't be master of his slaves unless they obey him. Huldah shall obey me."

CHAPTER XI.

The Cherokees, at the time Huldah was with them, were not so far civilized as they are now. They cultivated part of their lands, and had large herds of cattle, hogs, and horses. They united farming and grazing with hunting and fishing.

The encampment to which Huldah had been sent was situate on the west slope of a hill; at the base of it a large stream flowed rapidly in a south-eastern course, and between the stream and the village, and all around the village, were lands that had been cleared, and were in a state of tolerable cultivation. In some of them there were herds of horses and cattle, and in others growing corn and cotton. The houses were log cabins, one story high, generally with but one room. The windows were without glass, and the fire was made at the side of the hut, where an open place like the aperture for a chimney had been left to let the smoke escape.

Huldah came to the encampment at a very unfavorable time. Nearly all the men were out on a hunting excursion, and there was a famine in the camp. Not for food, for that abounded; nor for whisky, for they had more than enough of that, but for tobacco. Some of the women, old and young, sat growling in their huts, with their pipes in their mouths, vainly endeavoring to smoke. Others were smoking dried herbs and oak leaves, with great vigor. A troop of

boys seemed to be on the look-out for some arrival, and when Huldah and her guides came—although it was pretty late at night—the whole village was aroused and clustered around them asking for tobacco. They got a little, so little that only two could fill their pipes, and the rest went grumbling away. For two days after she arrived the famine raged and preyed upon the vitals of the community. Nothing was heard but angry growls, varied sometimes by a tornado of abuse, heaped by some old woman upon another, or upon some girl or boy who happened to come before her. Nothing was seen but the women sitting in the doors of their houses, each with her pipe in her mouth, as if she was holding it in readiness for the expected supply, or perhaps derived some comfort from its savory stem.

At last, about noon, two days after Huldah came, a great outcry was heard among the troop of boys. All the women ran together to an open space in the middle of the village, and saw descending the hill three young men with pack horses. Just behind the horses was a monstrous looking object keeping pace with them. The whole body seemed to be made of leaf tobacco, piled up tier upon tier, as high as the head of a man on horseback, and extending almost down to its feet. As it came nearer, Huldah saw that it was a horse laden with leaf tobacco.

At the beginning of the famine three young men were sent out to purchase a supply. The article was scarce, and they had to go farther than they intended when they set out. Their return was now welcomed by shouts from the boys, and the old women laughed and took their pipes from their mouths and waved them in the

air. In an hour every woman and girl and half the boys in the village, were enveloped in a cloud of tobacco smoke. They smoked on as if the fate of empires depended on their exertions. They smoked till midnight, when Huldah, wearied with the scene retired to rest, and when she rose in the morning she found them smoking. They became good humored, and clustered again around Huldah, until each article of her dress, and her hands and face were closely examined. She could not speak a word of the Cherokee language, and not one of them could speak a half a dozen words in English, so that their whole intercourse was by signs and gestures.

The other pack-horses were laden with salt and iron, and some clothing for the women and children. The distribution of these articles increased the general happiness of the village.

The next day an Indian youth came on horseback to the village. He led a coal black and beautiful pony, which had a side-saddle and highly ornamented bridle upon it, and he soon displayed before the gaze of all the women, some beautiful dresses and a riding hat with black ostrich feathers waving over it, which he informed them had been sent by Grey Eagle, with the pony, as presents to Huldah.

She blushed and smiled as she received them, and the young stranger was immediately regarded with veneration as the destined bride of their great and favorite young Chief.

The mother, to whose care Huldah had been committed, was an old woman, probably sixty years of age. She was a widow, and all her sons, except Grey Eagle, had fallen in battle. Her new daughter was

received at first without any sign of affection. Her son had sent Huldah to her, and for his sake she was admitted into her hut. The old woman sat nearly all day smoking her pipe, and crouching over a small fire, the smoke from which made her dark features still darker. She could speak but few words in English and their mode of interchanging their thoughts was at first by signs. But Huldah soon learned to speak the very few words which were necessary for the little conversation that passed between them.

Huldah made herself useful to her new mother. She made the hut neater and cleaner than it had ever been before, and contrived in a thousand little ways to adorn it. She gathered wild flowers from the woods and placed them in pitchers and cups, and spread branches of evergreen over the earth floor of the cabin, and day by day added something that made her rude home more pleasant and attractive. The old woman at first was careless of these changes, and hardly seemed to know they had been made; but when other Indian women came and smiled, and ran to their own huts and adorned them also, she became proud of her new daughter and watched her every movement with delight. Huldah aided her in her labors. She waited upon her as she had waited upon Mrs. Mills, and these attentions continued from day to day for weeks and won the mother's heart. All the old affection for her children which so long seemed to be dead within her, was revived and invigorated, and concentrated upon Huldah. She loved her with a deep earnestness of affection, such as perhaps she had never felt for any one of her own children. Huldah was an Indian now, straight

and light, and graceful as any of the tribe, and when she was wrapped in her blanket and her hair filled with eagle's feathers—with mocassins upon her feet and a bow and arrows at her back—but few persons could have discovered any difference between her and those who had been born in the tribe.

Grey Eagle did not come as soon as she expected to see him. She inquired of the chief of the tribe she was with what detained him, and was told she would know from himself when he came, but he could tell her nothing.

After she had been there six weeks, early one morning a stranger, guided by an Indian boy, came to the hut in which she lived. He was brown, and had the sun-burnt and swarthy complexion of an Indian, but his deep clear blue eyes and brown half curled hair, and his gait and carriage so different from the Indian, showed Huldah at the first sight that he was a white man. Another look and she sprang into his arms.

“Father!”

He embraced her tenderly and led her into the hut.

“I have come, my child, to live with you. We will have a hut to ourselves, and you shall be my house-keeper, and we will live together for the rest of our lives.”

Huldah leaped and clapped her hands and embraced her father and leaned her head upon his shoulder and wept.

“You have all your life been a slave, now you shall be happy and free.

The next day they went to another encampment of Indians, nearly half way between the place they had left and the old encampment, of which Grey Eagle

was Chief. Here, in a hut which her father had already built, they made their humble and happy home. Her father's old passion for whisky seemed to have forsaken him, and while he hunted in the woods or gave attention to his growing crops of corn and cotton and tobacco, she attended to her domestic duties.

Very soon after they were settled in their new home, Grey Eagle stopped at their hut, on his way to visit his mother. He talked with her father until midnight, and early the next day went on his journey.

Huldah was grateful to him for aiding her to obtain her freedom, but the old feeling that once had dominion over her had half passed away. Her affection for her father filled all her heart.

As she looked at Grey Eagle now, she wondered at the strange delusion of her senses. When she saw him before, he was indeed young, and tall, and graceful and intelligent and handsome, but the inexpressible charm that had, in her view, crowned his whole person with a mantle of living light, and hallowed every action so that his very steps seemed like the tread of a being more than mortal; where was it?

Alas! poor Huldah, it had not fled forever.

At the end of three days Grey Eagle returned. He was now more attentive to her than he had been before. He told her father how much his mother loved, and how warmly she praised her, and how sad she had been made by her departure. He even smiled when he talked to Huldah, and when he went away he shook hands both with

her father and herself, and said he would come again in a few days.

"I think," said her father to Huldah, "that Grey Eagle is more social than I have ever seen him before. When he is at home with the tribe he seems to be always a Chief, and too stern and dignified to talk much with any person, except indeed upon his business."

"He was quite social, father. I have seen but little of him before. He is a very pleasant companion."

"Yes, when he gets away from his tribe, and can lay aside his dignity, he is as pleasant and intelligent a man as I have met with. If he had not resumed the blanket and the moccasins, but had remained with the whites, he might, perhaps, in spite of the prejudice against his color and his race, have risen to distinction. But I do not blame him. I had myself rather be a free man with the Cherokees, than endure the trammels which civilized life imposes upon its victims. We are happy here. The sun is bright above us, and the mountain air fans our cheeks. The earth yields abundant harvests. What more do we want?" And as he said this he stared with fixed eyes at vacancy and sighed. "Yes," said he, "what more do we want?"

"Well, father, I want a great deal more than we have here. I want a new dress, and new shoes, and I would like to have ear-rings, and another string of beads, and a feather bed, and more blankets, and—"

"Nonsense, child. Women always want everything they can think of. Let us be contented with such things as we have."

"I suppose I must be, father, but still I can't help thinking of such things. I like to be free and to live

with you, but every day of my life I think of something else I would like to have: a new silk dress, flowers, and a bonnet with white feathers in it, and a breast-pin, and ear-rings, and gloves, and shoes, and stockings, and one thing I would dearly like to have—a green silk parasol to keep the sun off me when I go out of doors."

"Ah, my child, those things are very pretty, indeed, and perhaps at some day I may be able to get them for you; but they would be of no service here. They would only make the other women and girls in the encampment envy and hate you."

"Father, I would like to have some books, too. I am afraid I will forget everything I have learned, and after a year or two more, it may be that I will forget how to read."

"Yes," he said. "that is a reasonable wish, and perhaps I may be able soon to obtain some for you. You have told me of many that you have read. I think I can get others. Grey Eagle has some which I will ask him to lend you."

"I have no doubt he will do so, father, and then I will sit and read to you as I used to read to Mrs. Mills. I am sure you will like to hear me."

"Yes, daughter, I will listen with great pleasure while you read.

CHAPTER XII.

"SQUIRE," said Tom Giles, "please don't put that 'bout Huldah's larnin' in your book, 'cause the example's a bad one. If thar's any thing in this world that I'm more constitutionally and teetotally fornenst than another, it's throwin' away schoolin' on niggers. Squire, no good ever comes on it. I mind one case now, that when ever I think on it, always riles me."

"What was it?" said Strong.

"Why it were this, squire. Old Mr. Glibbers jined the Presbeterians, and the preacher told him if he would honor the Lord with his substance, he would be blessed, indeed. At first the old man was too close to mind him; but he kept on tellin' him and preachin' about it, till the old man said he would try it at a venter. So he had a yellow boy—some people said he war his own son, but no matter,—and the boy were smart, and the preacher said it would be a good thing to give him schoolin' enough to make him a preacher. So he made up his mind that he should be a preacher. The next thing, squire, were to raise the wind, for he thought nobody were fit to preach without that. So he talked of selling his cotton crop, but that fell short, and he had none to spare; and then he looked about and thought he'd sell a horse or two, and some cattle, but he could not spare them, and he were in great trouble to get money. So one day the preacher were at his house, and he opened his mind to him, and

told him what he wanted to do, and how badly he were off."

Then the preacher studied awhile and says: "Brother Glibbers, aint you got a servant or two you can spare; it seems to me you are a little over-stocked in that line."

"No," said Glibbers, "all my hands are needed to clear up the place and make the crops."

"Why, here's old Molly," says the preacher, "she can't work out of doors, and will sell for a nurse to any body as has young children."

"But," says old Glibbers, "Molly is the boy's grandmother."

"So much the better, Brother Glibbers, so much the better," said the preacher, "because you can't put his grandmother to a better use, than to sell her to educate her grandson for the ministry. I wonder that you never thought of that before. It's all in the family, you see, and the woman ought to be thankful that in her old age she can be made to do so much good."

"But Molly is a good old Christian woman," said old Glibbers.

"So much the better still," said the preacher, rubbing his hands; "so much the better for that, brother. I should feel sorry to see a yile sinner sold to educate a boy for the ministry. Always give of the best you've got to the Lord. If he were to be trained for a doctor or a lawyer, it might do well enough to sell a bad nigger to do it; but when you want to make a minister of him, sell the best you have got, brother, the very best, and don't offer the lame, or the blind to the Lord."

"But it looks queer to sell the boy's grandmother to educate him," said old Glibbers.

"Why, how strange you do talk, Brother Glibbers," says the preacher. "How many grandmothers do you think have been sold to educate the first men in the South,—our members of Congress, and lawyers, and doctors. Now is it not doing better with the money to educate them to preach the Gospel—than to serve the world."

"Squire, I can't tell you all that he said. It's been so long ago, that I may have forgot some; but the upshot of the hull was, old Molly were sold, and the boy, Tom, were sent off to some big school to larn to be a preacher, and arter a few years he came through the mill a great preacher. I have hearn him myself. He did not preach so loud as Father Blowhard, nor half so long as Elder Jones; he were smooth and oily, and pleased every body, and soon he turned rather impudent in his manners. He eat with white folks, and drank with white folks, and arter he got to be a great man, he married a rich white gal, and bought a stock of mules and niggers, and sot up for a gentleman. I don't like that, squire. I am constitutionally and tee-totally fornenst it—indeed I am, squire. It's wasting money to school niggers, and only makin' 'em impudent and saucy.

"It does seem wrong," said Mr. Strong, "to sell the boy's grandmother to educate him for the ministry."

"Squire," said Tom Giles, "don't say so. It does hurt my feelings to hear you talk so. Being as you come from Connecticut, whar the people in course don't know no better, squire, I can excuse you. I feel for you, squire. But you are under a mistake about that thing. It's right to hold 'em. Well, if it's right to hold 'em, it's righter still to sell 'em. Cause it's no use

to have 'em without you can sell 'em. If it's right to sell 'em, why not school children with the money? And if it's right to school children at all, it's righter still to school 'em to be preachers. And if it's right to sell any body to school a boy for a preacher, it's righter still to sell his own grandmother to do it."

"Yes," said Strong, "it is all very clear. You are quite logical, Giles."

"Give us your hand, squire," said Tom, seizing Mr. Strong's hand, "your coming right, fast."

Tom Giles had been sitting for an hour with both his elbows on the table, his face covered with his hands, listening to the narrative as it was read by Mr. Strong. The sound of a horses feet was heard, and Giles went to the window to see who was coming. He almost leaped as he said, "Jim Wilson," and hastened out to meet his old friend. Their greeting was cordial. After many inquiries respecting each others health, and the health of their families, Wilson took from his horse a pair of ragged, black, saddle bags, and they came into the tavern.

Strong looked out to see Giles' friend. He was an old man; but his hair was still black, and his deeply set, piercing grey eyes, gave a singular expression of wildness, to his sinister countenance. He was lame in one limb, and walked with a cane.

The old men walked into the bar-room, and Strong went on with his book.

After an absence of an hour, they came into the room where Strong was reading.

"Squire," said Giles, "this man is an old friend of mine. He came into this settlement arter the things took place, that your book reads about, but has hearn

tell of a great deal of them, and I've be'n tellin' him about your book, and he says he'd like to hear you read some on it."

"Certainly," said Mr. Strong, "I will read to Mr. Wilson with pleasure, and hope he will point out any errors he may find in my manuscript. I wish very much, indeed, to have the story in all its details exactly right."

"Sartainly," said Wilson, "I'll help you all I can." Strong read to the parties for an hour. While he was doing so, Wilson gave significant looks at Giles, and both Wilson and Giles left the room.

They walked together a hundred yards from the house, when Giles said, "Let's stop here in this shade."

"No," said Wilson, "come a little farther." They went on fifty yards farther, and Giles again wanted to halt.

Wilson pulled him by a button; "Come on here to this bunch of hazel bushes ahead."

They reached the place, and after they had looked carefully around, seated themselves closely together on a log.

Wilson looked Giles fully in the face.

"Do you love your country, Tom Giles?"

"Why, yes. Sartainly I do."

"Always knowed it. You've fit for your country—havn't you, Tom Giles?"

"Why, yes. You know I've done that thing more nor 'onst under Ginaler Jackson."

"Do you love Ginaler Washington, Tom Giles?"

"Sartainly I do. He's dead now, but I love him yit."

"Tom Giles, do you know what you 're doing here?"

"Why, yes; I 've told you. You scare me old friend."

"Tom Giles," said Wilson, hobbling to his feet, and standing before him, "do you love the American Union, and hate the British?"

"Sartainly I do," said Giles, rising to his feet, "what do you mean?"

"Well, now, let 's sit down again, old friend, and I 'll tell you."

They sat down. "This here man is a Yankee, aint he?"

"Yes," said Giles.

"I knowed it from the way he drawles his words through his nose, as soon as I hearn him," said Wilson. "And he 's a fixin' up a book about niggers and Indians, and liberty, and all that kind of thing?"

"Yes."

"And you 're helping him, Tom Giles?"

"Yes. He says I 've been of considerable service to him."

"Tom Giles, are you the same man you was twenty odd years ago, when you left these parts?"

"Sartainly—the very same."

"I tell you," said Wilson, again getting on his feet and standing before Giles, "that thar man is a dissolving of this glorious Union."

Giles was thunderstruck.

"He is—I tell you he is," said Wilson, "every line he writes in his book, makes this blessed Union weaker and weaker, and by the time he gets to the eend of it—it will all be broken into fifty pieces, some of 'em," said Wilson, (pausing for an adequate phrase to

express his thoughts,) "some of 'em not bigger," (another pause, and during which he pulled out part of a red, cotton handkerchief, and wiped his face,) "some of 'em, Tom Giles, not a bit bigger than this here piece of a hankercher."

"You don't say so," said Giles.

"And you—you, Tom Giles, are a helping him to split the Union, and ruin the country."

"He seems like a mighty friendly, sociable, clever man, and pays well," said Giles.

"Ah, but he 's a Yankee, Tom Giles. Never," said Wilson, shaking his head, "never trust a Yankee, and you 'll always be on the safe side, old friend."

"Oh!" said Giles, "I never thought of that."

"Tom Giles, don't you know that times is altered here?"

"Yes," said Giles, "I see a mighty change. I 'd hardly know the place if it wern't for the mountains, and rocks, and trees, and creeks. Thar's been so much clearin' done in these parts, and so many houses built, that I hardly know it; and, as for the people, you are the only one of my old friends I 've seen since I 've been here."

"Yes, Tom, all these things has changed; but, thar 's other changes here. What people used to think was right, is just exactly wrong now, and what people used to think was somehow wrong, is the rightest thing in the whole world now."

"You don't say so," said Tom Giles, "you don't say so, old neighbor? Has the people hereabouts—these new comers and youngsters—got out a new Bible like the Mormons, and sich kind of people?"

"No, Giles, that 's not it," said Wilson, shaking his

head ; "they 've got the same old Bible, but we 've found new meanings that nobody suspected when you lived here. Do you know, old friend, that slavery is the corner stone of our hull country, and whisky 's its life blood ?"

"No," said Giles, "that seems kind of strange now."

"Well, neighbor, take my word for it, it 's jist so, and the man that says a word, or writes a book again' slavery, throws salt on the tail of the 'Merican eagle, and will bring that blessed bird down to the ground, so the British will ketch it."

"Yes," said Jim Wilson, standing before Giles, and putting his long, bony finger close to his face, his eyes flashing and his lips compressed, "yes, neighbor, ~~the~~ man that says one word agin' slavery, is a throwin' salt on the 'Merican eagle's tail, and will bring it down in the dust."

Tom Giles dropped on the ground, and sat cross-legged like a tailor, with his face bent to his knees for five minutes without saying a word, and then raised his dilated eyes to Wilson,

"Air you in airnest, Jim Wilson, or air you only a tryin' to make me miserable ?"

"Tom Giles I 'm in airnest. I scorn to trifle on such a solemn subject."

Giles again covered his face with his hands. "Why," said he, "the 'Merican eagle might fall in the water, and come like a half drowned chicken out of a wash tub." He covered his face with his hands, and sat in silence a moment, and then extended his right hand to Wilson. "Help me up, neighbor, for I 'm mighty weak, and the cold chills run down my back like ice—help me up.

Why, I never, dreampt of any sich thing. In old times when I lived here every man as was too poor to own a nigger, had the right to be constitutionally and teetotally fornenst slavery, and them as did own 'em, had the right to say they knowed it was wrong, but they could not get rid of them. And them as chose to drink whisky, could do so; and them as chose to let it alone, could do so."

"Ah," said Wilson, shaking his head, and striking the end of his cane hard upon the ground, "times is altered now. Slavery is the corner stone of this glorious Republic, and whisky's its life blood. The man that's opposed to them is an inemy to his country, and a friend to the British. The Bible's down on all sich people, you know, neighbor."

"Yes," said Giles, "I know that; let me take your arm neighbor, for I'm so weak, I can hardly walk. The cold chills run down my back, so that I'm afeered I'll have the ague."

Tom walked about fifty yards, and then sat down. "I'm so weak, Jim Wilson," said he, "that I can't walk a step further; only think that here I've bin three days a helping a Yankee to split the Union." Wilson waited awhile, but as Giles grew worse, he went to the tavern and got the landlord to come and help him to the house. After consultation, they made a litter—put Giles on it, and bore him softly along. As they went, the old man murmured from time to time, "Only to think, that me, Tom Giles, has been a throwing of salt on the 'Merican eagle's blessed tail, and splitting the Union. Who'd have thought that of Tom Giles, when he were blazing away at the British at New Orleans under Gineral Jackson. Who'd have thought

it of me—that has always loved my country more nor my wife nor children."

Wilson and the landlord bore Giles along on the litter, his feet foremost toward the tavern, when Giles made a sign with his hand for them to stop. They rested one end of the litter on a large log, and the other end on the ground, so as to place Giles in a half recumbent position. He wiped the cold sweat from his forehead with the end of his hunting dress. "Neighbor," said he, "when I were a young man, I heerd Tommy Littlejohn make a fourth of July narration. It were while he were studying to be a lawyer, and a member of Congress on the Chowan River, and it were printed in the Genius of Liberty, and I liked it so much, that I got a good part of it by heart, and remember it till this day, only my mind so scattered now, that I can't call it up. I've said it over to myself a hundred times when I were walking in the woods a hunting. 'Ef I only could say it now, it 'pears to me it would do me good."

"Do try and remember it now, neighbor Giles," said Wilson. "Do try, for I'm consarned for you."

"Take time to collect your thoughts," said the landlord. "It may do you good to remember it."

Giles paused and rubbed his forehead with his hand. "I can't get exactly right, and its no use to try now; but it were something like this: 'While the 'Merican eagle were a little bird in the shell, he chirped Liberty, and when he picked a hole in the shell jist big enough to stick his bill through, he hollowed for Liberty; and the very day he were hatched, he flew away with some of the egg shell sticking on his back—screaming Liberty—Liberty for ever. And ever since he's been

buisy gouging out tyrant's eyes with his bill, and tearing the inimies of freedom with his claws.' That's all I mind now," said Giles, "but little as it is, I feel better."

They took Giles on the litter to the tavern, and bathed his legs in hot whisky and red pepper, and gave him some whisky to drink. After awhile he got better, received his pay from Mr. Strong, and went home with Wilson. **L. OF C.**

CHAPTER XIII.

HULDAH's father had been a gentleman in his early life, but he became a drunkard and abandoned his family and friends, and wandered off to a county in Virginia, his native state, a hundred miles from his home. He earned a scanty subsistence by teaching school sometimes, and at other times by crying sales for administrators, and carrying the chain for surveyors. He became acquainted with Huldah's mother and was the father of four of her children.

He was out of the neighborhood when the family were sold, and afterward when he heard of their fate, he followed them from place to place on foot, hoping in vain to overtake them. He found Isaac, Huldah's oldest brother, still in the slave pen in Charleston, and learned from him the name and home of her purchaser. The other members of the family had been sold, some of them in North Carolina, on their journey, and others to purchasers who had taken them—Isaac could not tell where.

He then journeyed on foot on his way to Nortons until he come to Grey Eagle's camp, which he reached soon after Huldah came to Nortons. When he got there his feet were bare and sore, his clothes were tattered and his face and eyes inflamed and swollen from drunkenness.

The Indians are not remarkable for discrimina-

tion in their hospitality. All alike are welcome to their encampments in times of plenty and of peace. All alike are foes if they are of the nation or tribe with which they are at war.

Grey Eagle invited the stranger to his hut, and soon found that the poor outcast had been educated and destined for a better position in life than that which seemed to be his fate.

They talked upon subjects of general interest, then of poetry and romance and history, until his guest, by his manners and intelligence, fully established his claim as a gentleman of birth and education. Fortune, he said, he once had, and friends, but his fortune had fled and his friends had forgotten him.

He refused, at first, to tell his name, but after the inquiry was repeated, he gave a name which the penetration of Grey Eagle instantly discovered was fictitious.

"My name," said he, "is Edward Corliss. My father was Richard Corliss, and my grandfather, John Corliss, all of Acton, in Cecil County, Maryland, where my friends and relations still reside."

As soon as Grey Eagle discovered that his guest was not frank with him, he became reserved and answered whatever inquiries he made so as to mislead him.

Corliss was bland and urbane, and apparently frank; and Grey Eagle had need of his services and of his society.

Corliss found means to make himself useful to Grey Eagle, and his tribe. He wrote his letters, made up his accounts, and attended to details of business which Grey Eagle was too impatient to encounter.

Things passed on in this manner for a while. Corliss was adopted into the tribe, and assumed the dress of the

Indian. His few wants were easily supplied. His passion for strong drink had either forsaken him or was lulled into repose. He grew into favor by degrees, until Grey Eagle called him his friend.

One day, as they were hunting in the woods, Corliss said, "I have something that I wish to say to you."

"Say on," said Grey Eagle.

"I want a favor."

"You shall have it if I can grant it. Do you want a wife or lands?"

"Neither."

"Do you want money?"

"No."

"What is it?"

"I want you to help me."

"Help you; how?"

"There is a slave on a plantation near this place. I want to get her."

"On whose plantation?"

"On Norton's."

"How do you know it?"

"She and her mother and two brothers were sold to a trader. I followed them to Charleston and found the oldest brother there. He told me where Huldah is."

"Have you seen her since she has been there?"

"Yes, I hid myself near Norton's house, and after watching nearly all day, I saw her go to a spring for water and return to the house."

"Why do you want her?"

"I have always loved her. It seems to me that I'll die if I can not get her and make her free. That is now the object of my life. It is this that brought me to your hut, and for which I have changed my name."

“Why did you change it?”

“Because, if I told my true name I might defeat my purpose.”

“Right,” said Grey Eagle, “a good Captain never says anything nor does anything that may defeat him in battle. Can not you buy her from Norton?”

“No, I am too poor. I have wasted my estate, and have nothing.”

“I will help you, if I can. But let us walk on. Grey Eagle always, if he can, sleeps one night, maybe two, maybe three, before he make up his plan.”

Three nights passed, and early in the morning Grey Eagle approached the hut occupied by Corliss.

“Come, let’s hunt to-day.”

They were soon prepared, and when they had gone far into the woods, Grey Eagle stopped.

“My plan is made up. I will get Huldah for you.”

In the evening of the same day, Isham came to the camp with his basket of roots and herbs on his arm. He went into the woods with Grey Eagle, and after a long and earnest conference, went away, and Grey Eagle returned silent and moodily to his hut. No one inquired the object of Isham’s visit—no one dared to do so.

One Indian said that he had seen them conversing together in the woods two days before; but he did not know what they were talking about.”

CHAPTER XIV.

GREY EAGLE renewed his visit to Corliss and his daughter, at the appointed time, and was surprised to find his reception less cordial than it was before. Corliss, indeed, was polite, but constrained and reserved. Grey Eagle instantly observed his change of manner.

After a constrained conversation for half an hour, Grey Eagle adroitly turned it to the subject of Huldah's escape, and said, "they have been out hunting for Huldah. Norton headed the party, and came through our encampment. Unless your daughter is very careful, she may be discovered and captured. It will not do for me or for my tribe to make open resistance to any attempt to take her if she is found. Would it not be well if I should buy her and then she will be safe and free?"

Corliss sighed and rested his head upon his hand.

"I do not know what to do," he said.

"I know what to do, if you will leave the whole matter with me. I can buy her cheap now."

Corliss sighed again, and half shuddered as Grey Eagle uttered the word "cheap."

"No," said he, "I can not consent that any man shall buy my child."

"That will secure her freedom."

"Yes," said Corliss, his face coloring, "it may do so, but I never will consent to it. I shudder at the very thought of such a thing."

"What will you do then?"

"We will flee."

"Where?"

"I do not know—any where—so that we can be safe. To the everglades of Florida, or, perhaps, to the snows of Canada."

"Think of it again, and let me know. You may do better than either for your daughter and yourself."

The young chief remained in the hut till a late hour in the night, and exerted himself to please Huldah and her father. When he went away Corliss said, "Huldah, I do not like these visits of Grey Eagle."

"Why not, father? He is so pleasant, I like to hear him talk to you."

"He is pleasant, but he is an Indian, my child."

"Well, what of that? He has always been an Indian, and can't help it. You once liked his company very much: he has been the best friend we ever had."

"Yes, Huldah."

"When he came to see you some time ago, you were glad to see him, father. Has he done anything which makes him unwelcome now, or less worthy than he used to be?"

"No, child; he came to see me then. He came to see you to-day. No Huldah."

They were sitting in darkness, and Corliss did not see the blush that mounted upon Huldah's face.

"Huldah, you must not encourage his visits. I can not endure the thought that you shall marry any other than a white man."

"Oh, I am sure, father, that you are mistaken in the object of his visits. He never said a word to me

that would show any such purpose as you conjecture. Indeed he has hardly ever condescended to speak to me at all until to-night. You need not fear anything of that kind. He made me some presents it is true."

"But I do fear it. I tremble at it, and believe I am not mistaken."

"Father, Grey Eagle is the one who has secured my freedom. He gave us our home, and has been the cause of our being as comfortable and happy as we now are."

"Yes, child; but would it not be returning him too much for those favors if you should become his wife? He is an Indian."

"You forget, father, that I am not white and am a slave."

"True, true," said Corliss, in a half whisper. "My child is not white, and—she is a slave."

Early the next morning an Indian boy came to the hut, and placed a letter in Huldah's hands, so adroitly that her father did not see it. She read it at her first opportunity to do so, when no one saw her.

"Huldah is the bird that must sing in Grey Eagle's nest, whether he builds it on the top of the mountain, or in the prairies covered with flowers that spread out beyond the father of waters toward the setting sun. Grey Eagle's mother has told him of Huldah, and he loves her, and will make her his wife if she will follow him, and sing in his cabin, and dress the deer that he kills in the wood for his food. Your father don't like me. White man like Indian well enough when he is in trouble, but when Indian help him out, then he forgets him and says he's only an In-

dian. If Huldah don't want to see Grey Eagle again she will never look upon his face. If she would like to see him and talk with him, she will put a piece of white ribbon in her belt, and Grey Eagle will see it when he comes to her father's hut to-day."

Huldah read the letter, and put it in her bosom.

What shall she do? If she puts the piece of ribbon in her belt she will see him once more. If it is not there when he comes, she will never look upon his face again.

She went to a little box in which she kept her scanty wardrobe, and took out a small piece of white ribbon. Her blanket was fastened tightly around her form by a black morocco belt. She held the ribbon in her hand, and looked at it, and looked at her belt. Shall she place it there? The act itself is trifling, but what may result from it may not be trifling.

Alas, poor Huldah, the whole history of her future life was written upon that little piece of ribbon, in letters invisible, indeed, to mortal eyes, but in characters of fire and blood. *She* saw nothing but a scrap of unsoled ribbon. Could she have seen what else was written there, she would have dropped it and fled from it as from a serpent of fire.

She held the ribbon in her hand and stood still and thought—if she placed it in her belt she would see him again. If she did not—and as she heard approaching footsteps—she placed it in her belt.

Grey Eagle gave but a glance at Huldah, and at the ribbon, and talked for half an hour with her father and went away.

Huldah was glad when he left them. She felt constrained and embarrassed while he was there. He did not talk to her, and, as far as she knew, did not look at

her as she sat quietly sewing in a corner of the cabin. She loved his society, and yet was glad when he left them.

After that a change came over the character of Hul-dah. She was no longer the gay laughing girl that sang in her father's hut, and laughed and skipped lightly as a bird across the floor. She was not morose nor sad, but sober and thoughtful. It seemed as if her future life had cast its deep dark shadow across her face.

Corliss' fears appeared to have been lulled by the last visit of Grey Eagle.

The impetuous Indian soon came again to their cabin, and his conduct now showed that he was determined to win or loose at once the prize he sought.

"I have not time," he said to Corliss, "to lose. My duties require me to be with my people. I love your daughter, and want to make her my wife."

Corliss sighed, and was silent.

"I know it all," he continued. "You are a white man and I an Indian. If I were a white Chief in one of your states would you object?"

"No."

"Grey Eagle is too proud to call any man his father unless he is heartily welcome to do so. When you were hungry, I gave you bread; when you were sick, I nursed you; when your child was a slave, I made her free; yet, I would scorn to take her as a recompense for these acts of friendship. If I can not have her heart, and your heart too, keep her until you find a braver and a better man, as a husband for your daughter."

"You have been very kind to me, for which I am not ungrateful."

“I do not want your gratitude.”

Corliss was silent.

“Grey Eagle knows no man who is above him. The Great Spirit only is his master. He will not stoop to beg, even a beautiful bride, when he loves her as he loves his own soul. His lips have never been taught words of flattery to woman, nor of supplication to man. He stands before you as an equal, or leaves you forever. What will you do? Speak, I am waiting to hear.”

“Have you Huldah’s consent?”

“No, I came first to you. That is the custom of my tribe. I enforce and obey our laws.”

Corliss was silent.

“You think the Indian is not the equal of the white man. Have you not come to live among us and put on the blanket and the moccasin; and are you not our brother?”

“Yes.”

Grey Eagle’s eyes brightened, and his cheeks flushed.

“What then is in the way?”

“Let me think on it a week, and I will answer you.”

“Right—Grey Eagle will come in a week.”

Grey Eagle returned. Corliss received him more cordially than before, and Grey Eagle saw at a glance that his scruples were removed.

Huldah came into the hut soon after he arrived, trembling and blushing as she extended her hand to him. He seized it, drew her to him, embraced and kissed her.

A few days afterwards a crowd of Indians were gathered around Corliss’ hut, and a missionary who had long been living with the tribe, united Grey Eagle and Huldah in marriage.

It is not part of our narrative to describe the rude festivities of the day?

The next day Grey Eagle and his bride, accompanied by her father, returned to the encampment at which his mother lived.

CHAPTER XV.

ABOUT three years after the wedding, as Norton was walking one day in the woods near his plantation, he met Tom Giles. It was not their first meeting. Giles stretched out his great hand to him: "I'm glad to see you, captain, cause you 're one of us."

"Thank you, Giles. I am glad that my neighbors like me," shaking Giles heartily by the hand. "Let us take a seat on this stump and talk awhile, if you have nothing better to do."

"Oh, captain, Tom Giles has nothing to do but tend a little patch of corn, and hunt. I'm never in a hurry, and can always spare an hour or so for a chat with a neighbor."

"Take a pinch of snuff," said Norton, passing a box to him.

"Thankee, sir; mighty nice. Well, you see, captain, we 've bin looking at you, and talking about you, and we kind of think you 'll do. That other man over thar," pointing in the direction of Rashleigh's house, "won't do at all. He won't have black niggers, and has got a parcel of white niggers about him to do his work. The captain thar is a queer one; every morning he calls all his people up to a great room, which they call a 'all, and reads prars to 'em out of a book, and on Sunday morning he reads prars and then stands up, and reads a sarmon to 'em out of another book he 's got. We 've stood it as long as we could; but he 's kept

the whole settlement in hot-water, as long as he 's bin here. One thing arter another has come out about him, till the neighbors are all the time in an uproar. First his reading prars, then his reading sarmons, and then his having white folks to do nigger's work, and to wait on him while he eats, and sich like, till the boys here caught a short, fat feller of 'em, and treated him to a coat of tar and feathers. But they won't go away; they 're still thar yet, and what 's to be done next, we don't know."

"Does he disturb any one in the settlement?" said Norton.

"Disturb any one? Why, I tell you, captain, the whole country has been in an uproar for miles 'round him, ever since he has bin here. How can people live in peace, when they have white people doing nigger's work?"

"Did he ever say any thing against any of his neighbors, or do any thing to injure any person?"

"Why, as to that, I can't say as he has, that I ever heerd of. But he ain't sociable, and don't do as we do."

"I see now what the matter is," said Norton, "he had no tact."

"I can't see, captain, how that could make any difference, and you 're mistaken, captain; he had a whole keg full of tacks. He brought his things out here in a string of six hoss wagons. Wash McGee—that 's my brother-in-law—stood by while they were unloadin' them and see the whole, and he 'll swar that thar was one keg full of nothing else but tacks. The captain come out, and McGee said to him, 'I reckon you 're gwine to keep a store down at the cross roads—ain't

you?' And the captain looked at him for a minute and never said a word, and then put his thumb in the arm hole of his waistcoat, and walked back in the house."

"I mean," said Norton, "that he does not conduct himself as the people do in this country."

"Exactly so, captain, you're right thar. It's a high law in this settlement, that 'when you are in Rome you must do as Rome does.' And he never will mind that law at all."

"That's a law everywhere," said Norton, "among all men, and in all countries, and in every city and town, and village, and in every art and occupation of life. The penalties for its violation are severe, and are always visited upon the offender. It is above all other laws, and all constitutions. You must conform to the opinions and usages of the country in which you are, or be excluded from the society of your race."

"Give me your hand," said Tom Giles, leaping up, and violently shaking Norton's hand; "you talk like a man of sense—indeed you do. It does me good to meet a man arter my own heart. The fellow won't neighbor with us at all. He'll neither borrow nor lend, 'cept trifles. You'll lend to a neighbor sometimes, won't you, captain?"

"Certainly; but I make it a rule not to lend to a man who won't bring back what I lend him, and lend to me in return."

"You're right thar again, captain. A man as won't lend, hisself has no right to borrow. Good day, captain."

"Good day," said Norton; and each went his way.

About a week after this interview, Tom Giles came

early one morning to Norton's. "I've come to ask a little bit of a favor of you, captain."

"I shall be happy to oblige you, Mr. Giles."

"Well, sir, its jest this. Polly—that's my wife—is kind of weakly. She were here two days ago, and seen that big looking-glass, (pointing to a large mirror) and would like to borrow it for to-day—only for to-day, captain. She's tuk a notion it will do her good, 'cause when she was here she looked in it, and said she saw herself from head to foot at once, and arter that she felt better of a pain in the small of her back, that she's subject to. It's coming on again, and she wants to set and look in the thing all day. She's sure it will cure her."

"I will be very glad if it does so, Mr. Giles; take the glass, Mr. Giles. I shall be very glad to hear that it has cured Mrs. Giles."

Tom tried to take the glass from its position on the wall, but could not do so. Two colored men were then called, and it was taken down. But how was he to carry it? It was too wide to be grasped in his arms, and too heavy to be carried on his head.

"Captain," said he, "if you'll lend me a rope, I can have it strapped on my back, and then I can tote it easy enough."

A rope was brought, and the glass was strapped on Giles' back, with the face outward, and he started on his journey, half reeling beneath his heavy load.

About four hours afterward, Norton went over to Tom Giles' house. It was a log cabin, with but one room; the floor was earth, and the roof covered with clapboards, with a fire-place almost the length of the house, on the north side, and on the south side of it

were three beds, raised from the ground by forked stakes of wood, with poles placed along them, on which were beds filled with straw, and covered with dirty and tattered clothing. The mirror was placed between the fire-place and the door, and extended from the upper floor to the ground. There was but one chair in the cabin, in addition to which were two rude benches for seats.

Mr. Norton found Mrs. Giles before the mirror, smiling complacently at the large, fat, red-faced object before her; but, with her smiles, there was also a look of gravity, such as a person should have who is taking medicine for a painful disease.

Six little Giles' stood behind her, with unwashed faces, and long, white, uncombed hair, distorting their features in all possible ways, and laughing at the ugly figures in the mirror.

Tom Giles was seated on a stool, quietly and gravely looking on.

"Good morning, neighbor; glad to see you agin to-day," said Giles, as he gave Norton his hand. "Git up, Pop, and let the gentleman have the cheer."

"No, thank you, I'd rather stand—let the lady keep her seat."

At the word "lady" Mrs. Giles stared at Norton, and all the little Giles ran into a corner, and tittered aloud.

"Do you feel any better, madam?" said Norton, bowing to Mrs. Giles.

"Considerable better, sir. The pain is left the small of my back, and got down in my legs."

"I do hope, madam, you will be well soon. I am very sorry you are indisposed."

"Oh, yes, the rheumatiz is a creeping down by degrees ; it 's got into my legs, and bine-by it will creep out at my toes."

"A very easy remedy, madam. May I inquire who prescribed it?"

"Oh, we ain't got no doctor in these parts. Uncle Isham does all the doctrin' for us."

"Your uncle, madam, must be a very skillful man ; his remedies should be more widely known."

"Oh, he ain't my uncle. He 's an old nigger. He goes about in the woods, and doctors people with roots and toad's heads, and ground lizards, and tells fortunes, and is a wizard. He 's a free man, and has got an old, blind woman for his wife. I kind of thought he would do me good."

"Is he a good doctor, madam?"

"Why, yes. He never killed no body, and don't charge much. I wonder you hain't seen him ; he lives only a little piece from your house."

"I have not yet seen him, madam."

"I have come now," said Norton, "to ask a favor of you, Mr. Giles."

"Speak out, captain. I 'll do any thing I can for you in this world."

"It 's a great favor, sir, which I do hope you will find it convenient to grant me."

"Sartanly," said Tom Giles ; "speak it out, captain. I 'll do any thing I possibly can for you."

"You have a rifle, Mr. Giles?"

"Me a rifle, captain ! Yes, indeed, I have that thing, and it 's the greatest rifle west of Cumberland Mountains. It hain't got any silver or ginger-bread fixins on it, only a plain warnut stock, and a good lock ; but

the best barl, captain—the very best barl that mortal man ever sot eyes on. It would do you good jest to take a look at her."

"Well," said Norton, "I want to borrow (here he made a long pause, during which all the young Giles' were hushed into deep silence, and he added, in half a whisper,) your rifle."

"My rifle, captain?"

"Yes, neighbor, I really do wish the loan of your rifle for this day. I have none, and want to practice so as to be able to chose a good one. I will, then, buy one."

"Captain, it's not a bit of use practisen for that. Judgin' o' rifles is a nat'ral gift; and if a man hain't got that gift, he may practice till he's as gray as a rat, and then he can't tell a good one from a bad one. Thar's Wash McGee—he's my brother-in-law—he's been practicin' all his life, and the other day he went down to the Muscle Shoals and bought a rifle of a man down thar. He gin him two bales of ginseng and five dollars to boot for it, and has got a thing *he* calls a rifle. Silver on the stock; silver fixins here and thar all over it, and a heap of finery on it, and it looks mighty bright and purty; but I tell you, captain, the barrel is as crooked as a laurel walking stick. I'd be a feered to shoot it, for fear the bullet would fly round and round, and come back and hit me. And he's a bragging on it, and a saying it's the best rifle in the whole settlement. I would n't give a peck of small potatoes for it, for my own use I mean. Indeed I would n't, captain."

"If you will lend me yours to-day, I will see whether I have the natural gift you speak of."

"Captain, it's out of fix. The lock is out of order. Indeed it is, captain."

"Oh, as to that, I have tools and a mechanical talent, and can soon put it in order, and return it in a better condition than when I got it."

"Captain, I'd be mighty glad to oblige you—indeed I would, but I've lost the bullet moulds. I've looked all over the cabin for 'em, and can't find 'em no whar."

"Oh, never mind that, I can soon hammer some lead into bullets."

Tom Giles gave a long, sharp whistle: "That won't never do in this world, captain. If my Purty Betty Martin—that's my rifle's name—should have such a bullet in her, she'd bust with madness. She never had such a bullet shot out in her, in all her days, and it wouldn't do, captain."

One of the little Giles, after a loud laugh, covered his face with his hands, and turning his head to the corner, said: "I knows whar the bullet moulds is."

"Run and get 'em, Martin," said Mrs. Giles.

The boy went out and came back with the moulds. Tom Giles hung down his head for a moment, and then taking up the rifle—"Thar she is, captain. Thar's Betty Martin, the best rifle west of Cumberland Mountains."

Norton took the rifle and the bullet moulds, and bidding Mrs. Giles good morning, went out of the cabin

Tom Giles followed him—"You're mighty welcome to Purty Betty Martin, captain; take good keer of her—will you? If it rains, put the lock under your arm, just so," taking the rifle from the hand of Norton, and placing the lock under his arm. "I say, captain, be

mighty kereful of Purty Betty Martin, if you please, cause the likes of her is not to be found in all these parts."

He then quietly handed the gun to Norton, and returned to his cabin.

"Tom," said Mrs. Giles, "I allers told you that you've got no more perliteness nor a bull pup."

"What's the matter, Polly?" said Tom, soothingly.

"What's the matter, indeed? Did n't you borrow this here looking-glass this very morning?"

"Why, sartainly."

"Did the captain seem like as if he didn't want to lend it to you?"

"Why, no, Polly. He rubbed his hands and said he were mighty glad to obleege me."

"Did the captain hem and haw about it, as you did to him before his face, about your rifle."

"No, Polly," said Tom, "he told me to take it the minute I axed him."

"Tom Giles, I *am* ashamed of you; you'll bring disgrace on your family, and make the gentleman think we've had no raising, and has got no perliteness. And then, Tom, sich an example afore your own children. Tom Giles, the pain has got up in the small of my back agin, and it is all owin' to your want of perliteness."

In the evening Tom Giles carried back the mirror, strapped as before upon his back, and followed by half a dozen little Giles', each making grimaces before it, and shouting at the ugly figures in the glass.

"How is Mrs. Giles now," said Norton.

"She's a leetle better, captain, and would have been well, she says, only she got a mighty back set."

"I will send a servant over," said Norton, "with your rifle and bullet moulds. I am practicing to get ready for the shooting match."

"Ah, captain, are you a comin' to our shootin' match? It's going to be the biggest that ever was west of Cumberland Mountains. Word has been sent out to Georgia, and to North Carolina, and South Carolina, and Virginny, and way down on Cumberland River, and to the settlement at the Muscle Shoals."

"When does it come off?"

"Next Monday, at noon."

"I will be there, I hope."

"You'll be mighty welcome, captain. We'll all be glad to see you."

The next day Norton borrowed McGee's rifle, and shot with it nearly all day.

Norton's name was soon spread through the settlement as one of the "finest kind of men," in terms not less exaggerated, than those used to disparage Rashleigh.

At the appointed time the great shooting match took place, but we must reserve this event for a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE shooting match took place at Job Steel's tavern, about the middle of November. Half way up a long but not steep hill, by the side of what was then a path, but is now a road, was a house made of hewn logs, one story high, with three rooms, and a kitchen in the rear, and a porch in front. It was a few yards back from the road, from which it was separated by some rails for a fence, but which was so low that any animal could cross it. Attached to a long hickory pole was a square white sign, on which was painted a green tree, and below were the words "Entertainment, Job Steel."

A group of white and colored women were in the rear of the house, busily engaged in roasting, boiling, baking, frying, and other preparations for the expected guests. Two deep trenches had been dug behind the house—each about seven feet long and three feet wide—and fires had been made in them, which were now burnt down to large beds of coals. Poles of green dog-wood were laid across the trenches, on which laid huge pieces of beef and venison and pork, to roast. At the front of the house was a wagon, from which some men were unloading several barrels, the heads of which were painted a dull red, and on them the words, "Old Rye Whisky."

The guests soon began to assemble. Some came on horseback, others on foot. The wilderness teemed with

life. From every part of the compass, through the woods, down the hills, down the ravines, along the paths and over the fields, men and women and boys and girls were gathering into Job Steel's tavern. Some came from Georgia, some from North Carolina, some from Virginia, some from Kentucky, others, and they were in the greatest number, from Tennessee. The bar-room was crowded, and Job Steel and two men and a boy were engaged in pouring rye whisky into green tumblers and receiving for each glass three cents. There was a great deal of politeness on the occasion. Each man when he first came received a glass of whisky, and stirred into it, with a pewter teaspoon, a large quantity of brown sugar, and took it into an adjoining room to some woman or girl who was there.

There was a great many introductions, each accompanied by the words, "I'm mighty glad to make your acquaintance, sir," and a bow.

The men were clad in hunting-shirts, with leather belts around their waists, in which were large butcher-knives. Their feet were covered with moccasins, and their heads with caps made of raccoon skins. Some of the young men wore coarse boots, and hunting-shirts made of red flannel. The women were dressed in calico, with large flaming figures; red was evidently the favorite and fashionable color. Ear-rings graced their ears, and strings of blue glass beads adorned their necks. Although they were heated with walking, many of them wore green mittens on their hands.

We shall not attempt to describe the dinner. Wild turkeys and venison abounded. Pies and pickles, beets and potatoes, all that the season and the country produced, were there in abundance. After dinner the

bar-room was again crowded, and the tumblers again carried to the ladies, and then filled again and drained by the men.

All then went down to the shooting ground. It was at the base of the hill, and by the side of a small stream of water, which flowed in a west course; several rude huts had been built for the occasion, and benches made of rough boards were placed on logs for seats for the guests.

The target was placed on a white pine board, which was about five feet long and six inches wide, and was nailed to a large poplar tree. The target was made with black paint, near the top of the board, and was about the size of a half dollar; and in the centre was pasted a piece of white paper, about a fourth of an inch in diameter. The distance was one hundred and fifty yards. Half a dollar was to be paid, invariably in advance, and each person's name was placed on a list as soon as payment was made, and he fired one shot off-hand, in the order in which his name was on the list.

The firing commenced. Many hit the black mark. Every shot went near it, and a few cut the edge of the white paper. While it was going on, Norton rode up. He attracted general attention, as he was the only man who wore a broadcloth coat. He shook hands with all his acquaintances, and was introduced by Tom Giles, with great form, to the strangers. Mrs. Giles and all her children were seated on one of the benches, and looked on with great complacency. She thought her husband was the "perlitest man in the crowd." After the ceremony of introduction to the strangers was all over, Norton saw Mrs. Giles and inquired the state of her health. She thanked him, and replied that "the

mis'ry in the small of her back was most gone, but she had an awful pain in her toes, the big uns 'specially."

"Are they much swelled, madam?"

"No, thank you, sir, but they're mighty red, sir."

Norton paid his entrance money. He then borrowed McGee's rifle, and awaited his turn. All had now fired. The white paper had been cut on all sides, so that but a very small part of it was left, and the black mark had been so perforated with bullets that the one that fired last did so with great disadvantage.

As this was the last shot on that round, and as he was an object of general interest, the whole party were attentive spectators. At the instant his name was called, he was at his place and fired. A shout told that he had won the prize. Some hinted that it was a chance shot; but the prize was won, and instantly handed over to him. It was an old silver watch, which would go three days without winding, and said to be of great value. He took the watch and was congratulated by all present; then he exchanged it with Job Steel for two barrels of whisky, which were brought before his friends and the heads knocked in, for the free use of the company.

After shaking hands with the whole party, and after he had bought, for the ladies, a barrel of sweet cider, and a large quantity of cakes, apples, and candies, from a cake woman who was selling from a cart, he rode home.

While they were preparing a fresh target, the men gathered in groups and discussed the character and merits of Norton. Even those who believed he had won by a chance shot, were loud in his praise. All agreed

that he was the man to be General of the militia, and should represent them either in congress or in the state legislature.

All was now in readiness for the second round. No one as yet had been informed what the prize was. Bill Harris, however, mounted a bench, and said :

“ Gentlemen !”

All the men took off their caps.

“ Mr. Norton, the gentleman what won the watch, is a rich planter, and can afford to give it away ; but what he’s done is to be no rule for the rest of us. So to keep off all hard feelings, I want it to be agreed on beforehand that whomsoever wins the next prize is to keep it and take it home with him, and to take good keer of it.”

All instantly agreed to so reasonable a proposition, and the shooting for the second round commenced.

Wash McGee hit the centre, and won the prize.

The judges went into one of the huts and brought out a mulatto woman, about forty years of age. Her face was scarred into ridges by the small-pox, and her eye-balls were white : she was blind.

Some of the men seemed disposed to laugh, but the frown on McGee’s brow checked them. The man who laughed at him, must fight him.

The woman was the slave of Bill Harris, and the wife of Isham, the negro doctor and fortune-teller and conjurer, mentioned by Mrs. Polly Giles to Norton. As she was of no value to the owner, she lived with her husband, in a hut in the woods, and discharged her household duties as best she could.

Other rounds were fired and prizes won ; but we must omit a notice of them, as they are not connected with our story.

Tom Giles took neither part nor interest in the subsequent rounds. He went a hundred yards from the scene, and sat thoughtfully and alone upon a log. One of his friends who had fired and failed on the second round, went up to him and sat by his side.

"You seem kind a down hearted, to-day, Mr. Giles."

"Yes, indeed, I am. My heart is a most broke."

"What's the matter? You don't care about not winning? You've won so often at shootin' matches that it's high time you had a change of luck."

"Ah!" said Tom, with a deep sigh, "it's not that, but it's because my rifle, my "Perty Betty Martin," is disgraced afore the whole settlement, and it's jist my own fault. If she'd a bin beat by any other rifle on the ground, I would not have keered, but to be beat twice by that thar shootin' iron of Wash McGees, that's as crooked as a laurel walking stick, that's the pint as hurts me. And it's all owin' to my not minding of a sarmon."

"What sarmon do you mean, Giles?"

"One that I heered ten years ago, on the Chowan river, in North Carolina, afore I moved out here. It were by Elder Sutton, at a great association, and bein' as it was the big sarmon, and he was the great preacher, it was preached on Sunday mornin', and I went five miles to hear it."

"What was it about, Mr. Giles?"

"Why, you see, it were about Solomon, the smartest man that ever was, or ever will be, in this world, and he were tee-totally ruined by mindin' his wife. He minded his wife, and one streak of bad luck arter another come on him, till he got broke up and were tee-totally ruined. It's jist the same case with me here to-day. I minded my wife and now I'm ruined."

“How so, neighbor?”

“Why, you see, Pop’s got a thunderin’ pain in the small of her back, and nothing would do her but she must have a great big looking-glass that Norton has got, brought over to our house, and she set afore it all day. I tried my best to perswade her out of it, and wanted her to take snake root or some other yarb tea; but no, she fretted and fumed, till at last I went and borroed it for her. I most broke my back in totin’ it, and I’ve had a crick in it ever since. Being as I borroed from Norton, I was bound to lend to him agin, and he came over the very same day and borroed my rifle.”

“Did he hurt it?”

“Not a bit. It looked just as good when he sent it home as when he got it, but the charm was gone. I were warned of it afore I lent it to him. I never hated anything so bad in my life as to lend it, because, you see, I met old Isham in the woods one day, and he looked at my rifle and told me if ever I lent it, it would never win again, and what he told me is come true.”

It may not be amiss to state in this place—for the purpose of showing the dilligence of Mr. Strong in collecting his materials for this book, and the care he has taken to have all his facts accurately stated—and to convince the reader how fully he may rely upon their substantial accuracy—that after he had made inquiry of Giles, but in vain, to learn the text from which the sermon he referred to was preached, by Elder Sutton, on the Chowan river, in North Carolina, he made a journey of several hundred miles to the place from which Tom Giles emigrated, and there, after diligent inquiry, he found one, and but one, person—an aged baptist

woman—who was at the association, and heard the sermon referred to. It was from the text, “And it came to pass when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods,” 1st Kings, XI Chapter, 4th verse.

This great error of Giles’ is but one of a thousand instances constantly occurring, which induces us to ask, we trust not with unbecoming impatience, “When will ministers learn to adapt their language to the capacity of their hearers?”

We hope the lesson will neither be overlooked nor forgotten. A word to the wise.

she's a' young and full of life, and in such a way, as you can't
tell good wood from bad wood. I don't know what I can do with her, but I
will use I will be your a' day in the woods, and I will
have her all to myself.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEN McGEE took his prize home, his wife, who had been detained by a toothache from going to the shooting match, received it with a shout of laughter. "And so Wash," said that amiable lady, "you've won a prize, have you, with your new rifle to-day? Well, I 'mire its beauty, but do you think I'm going to take care of that thar old blind nigger?"

"I pledged myself afore I won the prize, to take it home and take good keer of it; so thar's no help for it now."

"What did you do it for? You might have been sure there was some trick in the thing, or such a pledge would not have been asked for. Who ever heard of such a thing afore, as a man being asked to pledge his word to take keer of a prize?"

"Well, Katy, it's too late to talk now. We all made the same bargain; any one who won would have had to do just what I've got to do."

"Well, what will you do? I've got no room in this cabin for this old creeter."

"I don't know what to do, Katy. I never was so put to my wits end in all my life afore. What to do, I don't know."

"Why, let the old thing go back to her husband, and live with him in his cabin in the woods, just as she has been a doing, and tell all as asks you that you would have been willing to take keer of her, accordin' to

promise, only your wife wouldn't let you. I've made no sich promise, and I guess it will be a long time afore I am caught in sich a trap as that, I can tell you."

"Tell the men my wife wouldn't let me?" said McGee.

"Yes; tell 'em what you know is the truth, and you might as well own it at first as last."

"But, Katy, it will expose me."

"Not so much as you think for. I guess thar's more nor one man in this world as can't do jist as he pleases inside the cabin."

McGee sighed and sat down on an empty bee-hive.

"Well, Katy, I guess it's all I can do, any how."

Minna was standing silent in the middle of the room during this conversation, with her hands folded across her breast. She turned her white eye balls from time to time toward the speakers, as if she was looking at them, and sighed.

"Minna," said Mrs. McGee, "we can't keep you here. We've no room for you in our cabin."

"Well, ma'm," replied Minna, "what is I to do?"

"You must go back to whar you come from."

"To my husband."

"Yes."

"Thank you, ma'm; me and him has lived long time wid one another, and he'll take care of me. When must I go, missus?"

"Go now—as quick as you please."

"Missus, ken you send some body along wid me, to show me the way—'taint far, I believe."

"Thar now, Wash, you see what's to be done. You've won the prize of leadin' a blind nigger about for

the balance of your life. A new rifle is a great thing, I must confess."

"No, ma'm," said Minna, faintly and meekly. "'Ef I ken only get to my own little hut, I'll never be any trouble to him again."

Mrs. McGee went to the door, and called three times very loudly—"George Washington—George Washington—George Washington."

The third call was replied to by the interesting inquiry,

"What the devil do you want with me?"

"Come here this minute."

"I can't. I'm a hulling warnits."

Mrs. McGee rushed to a tree, and began to tear some branches from it, and, at the same time, the sound of rapid footsteps and a loud laugh, were heard from George Washington, who was ingloriously beating a retreat.

She then called as loudly as before—"Pola Bonaparte—Pola Bonaparte—Pola Bonaparte."

Pola Bonaparte was more dutiful than George Washington, and came to the door.

"What do you want, old woman?"

"Your Pap's been to the shootin' match, and has won old blind Minna, and fetched her home here on us. You must carry the old thing back to her hut."

"Can't—ain't got time—do it yourself."

"If you don't do it right away, I'll knock your blamed brains out; so don't let me hear another word out in your mouth."

"Why, ma'm," said Pola Bonaparte, a lad about ten years old, with his hair glued up into knots with molasses, an old sugar-loaf, white wool hat on his head, and both

his hands thrust to the bottom of the pockets in his trowsers, "do *you* think I am going to disgrace myself with leading a blind nigger? It's unreasonable. Do it yourself, and then you 'll know it's done right," and Pola thrust his hands deeper in his pockets, put his hat on the side of his head, and walked off whistling *Hail Columbia*.

"Wash," said Mrs. McGee, "you've fetched this wench here, and you've got to take her home yourself, cause you see my children is too spirited to demean themselves with any such thing, and I can't impose on the young 'uns. You'd better start quick and have it over with as soon as you ken."

McGee took his hat and led Minna to her hut.

About a year after the prize had been won, George Washington came one day in breathless haste to his mother: "What do you think, old woman?"

"What, Georgey?"

"It's about old Isham and blind Minna."

"I don't know; I have not seen 'em nor heerd of 'em for a year, and I don't care if I never see nor hear of 'em again."

"Well, I was thar at their hut jest now, and what do you think?"

"I don't know, George Washington, so you must tell."

"Well, I wish I may be busted in ten thousand pieces, if she aint got a baby—a little boy, two weeks old."

"Old Minna—a baby?"

"Yes; I seen it myself a laying on her lap, and she a laughing over it, and old Isham a laughing too, and chucking the little thing under the chin. They've got

a cradle for it, made out of a split log, and lined with hay and some old clothes."

The year had been a lucky one to McGee. During that time he and his wife had become members of a new Baptist church, recently established in the neighborhood.

Minna was a Methodist, and the Rev. Theophilus Blowhard was the preacher on the circuit, and had been condescending enough one Sabbath after service, and after he had baptized the white children offered for baptism, to state that as our colored brethren have souls as well as white people, he would baptize any colored children of members that might be presented for the ordinance. This he said with a look of such great condescension, that the whole congregation thought him as meek as a lamb.

Minna, led by her husband, and carrying her child in her arms, walked humbly up the aisle to the pulpit steps, and the Rev. gentleman was about to administer the rite, when a brother whispered to him.

"Brother Tompkins tells me you are a slave?"

"Yes, master."

"And that your master is a Baptist?"

"Yes, master."

"Have you asked his consent to have your child baptized. It may be," said the preacher, with an arch smile, at which all the congregation smiled also, "that he will have it taken to a duck pond, and plunged under head and ears."

"I have not said any thing to him about it; though he's my master, he lets me do just as I please. I lives with my husband here, and he and me wants our baby baptized."

Isham made a low bow to the minister, and said: "Yes, sarr."

"We had better defer it for the present, until you can see your master. We must all be careful to do nothing,—we must all be careful, brethren and sisters," said the old man, "to do nothing to give offense to our brothers and sisters, (for they *are our* brothers and sisters, raising his voice still higher though they don't believe in the blessed doctrine of free grace) of other denominations of Christians. We must be very careful," said the old man, shaking his head, and turning to remount the pulpit steps.

The brother again went up to the minister and told him that Mr. McGee was, perhaps, at the Baptist meeting-house, which he would have to pass on his road to the place where he was to take his dinner.

"Well, then," said the Rev. Mr. Blowhard, "if you will take the child by the Baptist meeting-house, I will meet you thar, and if your master will consent, I'll baptize it right in the face of all the Baptists in this settlement, and thank the Lord for the blessed privilege of doing so."

The congregation all smiled again, and Minna and her husband started on foot across the fields for the Baptist meeting-house, while the Rev. Mr. Blowhard, accompanied by two brothers, went on horseback to the same place, slowly along the road.

Isham and his wife were at the meeting-house when Mr. Blowhard and his companions got there. The services were not yet over. An agent from Charleston, who was traveling for the purpose of arousing the churches to greater effort in behalf of the cause of foreign missions, was there, and his remarks, following

the regular sermon and other services, caused the meeting to be extended to a greater length than usual.

Isham and his wife waited under a tree near the meeting-house, and Mr. Blowhard and his companions dismounted, and hitched their horses, and seated themselves on a horse block. At length the hum of voices and the shuffling of feet announced that the meeting was over.

"You must go and ask your master now," said Mr. Blowhard to Minna.

"Can't you go with me, master? May be if you'll say a word or two to him, he'll be willin' for your sake, when he wouldn't for me."

"I had rather not. You must get your master's consent, and then I am ready to administer the rite."

But the companions of Mr. Blowhard looked at each other so significantly, that the reverend gentleman added—"Yes, yes, I will go with you."

Mr. McGee, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Bean, the agent, and by Elder Hawkins, his pastor, came out of the house after nearly all the others.

Minna approached them with the child in her arms. The gentlemen stopped and a crowd collected around them.

"Please, master," said Minna, "I wants my baby to be christened, and this here gentleman, who is somewhar near by, is willing, provided you is willing for him to do it."

"Yes," said Mr. Blowhard, "I am willing to administer to the child the ordinance of baptism, and it is a blessed privilege,—this woman has to dedicate her child to the Lord, in its infancy, by baptism, and as

she has requested it, I have not the heart to refuse it. Indeed, brethren, I can not refuse it with a clear conscience, unless you interpose, and refuse her the privilege. I am so anxious, and always have been, to preserve harmony between different denominations of Christians, that I will not baptize the child, if you object. The responsibility rests now wholly with you."

"Well," said Mr. McGee, "if that's all, I'm willing, perfectly willing, jist as soon as you show me the text in Scripture that allows you to do it."

While he was saying this, Mr. Blowhard took the child from its mother's arms, and held it before Mr. McGee.

"The text in Scripture," said Mr. Blowhard, "the whole Bible is full of 'em. Lydia and her household were baptized."

"Yes," said McGee, "on profession of their faith. If this child will say it believes, I am willing—perfectly willing, for you to baptize it."

"It can't talk yet," said the mother.

"Well, then," said McGee, "I am conscientiously opposed to baptizin' all who are not believers."

The agent rubbed his hands, and looked delighted, and the eyes of the brethren and sisters sparkled with joy.

"I wash my hands of it," said Mr. Blowhard. "The responsibility, as I told you, at the commencement of our conference, rests with you;" after a pause, he added, looking around him—"and with this church and congregation."

The methodist brothers looked up and smiled.

The crowd began to disperse, when Mr. Blowhard,

having handed the child to its mother, went alone up to Mr. McGee, and half whispered :

“ Will you SELL it, brother ? ”

“ Yes,” said McGee, “ in course. I’m a raisen it for sale. But I can’t do it on Sabberday.”

“ Of course not.”

“ Ride over to my house to-morrow morning, and we’ll talk the matter over, if you please.”

“ Yes, sir, I’ll be there by ten o’clock, if not sooner.”

An old woman, the mother of Mrs. McGee, pulled the missionary by the sleeve, and took him aside. “ Can’t you say a word to brother McGee, to keep him from parting this woman and her child ? ”

“ Parting them ? ”

“ Yes ; he will sell that child to the methodist preacher to-morrow morning, unless you tell him not to do so. A word from you will have great weight with him. I am a mother, and feel for the poor old woman. I heard what has passed between them, and learned enough to know that all is agreed on but the price.”

“ My dear sister,” spreading out both his hands, “ both of my hands are full of the Lard’s business. I have as much as I can do.”

“ But you are going home with brother McGee, and can drop a word.”

“ My dear sister, when I came here, it was with the determination not to interfere with the legal institutions of the state. I can not turn aside from the great work in which I am engaged, of pulling down the strong-holds of sin in Burmah, and of preventing the burning of widows on the funeral piles of their deceased husbands, and of reforming, as fast as we can, the laws that sustain idolatry in that dark land. It would be an abandonment of the work of the Lard to turn aside and

take part in this controversy. Brother McGee is a good man, and needs no advice from me. It might be offensive, and certainly would not be in good taste, if I were to obtrude my views upon him."

"I don't know," said the old woman, "how that is. It seems to me that you have as good a right to talk to an American as to a Hindo, and to a brother in the church as to a heathen."

"Yes, sister, all things are right, but all things are not expedient. If I should take part in this matter, there is no knowing where it will end."

"I hope," said the old woman, "it will end in preventing our fellow-christians from being robbed of their own offspring."

"That wish, my dear sister, does great credit to your heart. I have no doubt you are sincere. I hope the Lord will keep you in the path of prudence. My friends are waiting for me. My hands are full of the Lard's work, sister; I can not meddle with the laws of this state"

Before ten o'clock the next day, the Reverend Theophilus Blowhard was at Mr. McGee's.

"Well, brother, I have a place to put that child of yours in, and will buy it on fair terms. How old is it?"

"Eighteen months old, sir."

"What will you take for it?"

"Three hundred dollars, if I can get it, all in cash; 'cause, you see, I want to make a handsome donation for foreign missions, and need the money to-day."

"Too much, entirely, too much, brother. I've made up my mind what to offer you for the thing. I have a ten acre lot, in a town just laid out, on the Mississippi River, in this state. It will be a thriving town in a few years, and may be a fortune to your whole family some

day. I'll give you that, and one hundred dollars for the article in question."

"Agreed, said McGee."

Mr. Blowhard called for writing materials and wrote the contract and paid the purchase money.

While he was doing so, the Reverend Mr. Bean sat at another table, and was writing a letter to his constituents in Charleston. He made a report of his journey, of the state of religion among the churches he was visiting, of their interest in the cause of foreign missions, and of the amount of money he had collected. But he did not report the scene of which he had been a witness. The society which he represented did not want any information on that subject.

He then deliberately counted the collection of the preceding day, put the half dollars in one pile, and the quarter dollars in another and, the smaller coin in another, made a careful note of the whole, with the names of the donors, in a little book which he carried in an inside pocket of his vest. He was doing the Lord's business, and his hands were full. He could not turn aside to the weak and beggarly elements of this vain world.

Mr. Blowhard took from a belt which he carried around his waist, one hundred dollars in gold, and paid it to McGee.

"Brother," said Mr. MeGee to the agent, "I'me mighty glad it's in my power to help you. Take this here five dollar gold piece, and gin it to the good cause, and 'may the Lord have marcy on it.'"

The agent added the coin to the list in his book, with McGee's name.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AFTER the sale of Minna's child, McGee said: "Brother Blowhard, let's go over to the hut whar these folks live, and I'll deliver the property to you." They went over, but the hut was vacant. The fire was out, and the ashes were cold upon the hearth.

"Gone, eh?" said McGee. "Whar could they have gone to? And whose told 'em that we was about to trade?"

"Could that thar agent at your house have done so, brother?" said Father Blowhard.

"Don't know," said McGee. "He took a walk this very morning afore breakfast. It would be mighty mean of him to sarve me sich a trick as that."

"Thar's no knowing what some men will do, when they come amongst us," said Blowhard.

"Yes, brother; but this man seems so nice, and smooth spoken, and so pious, and prays so pretty, and never says a word agin slavery, that I can't find it in my heart to accuse him."

"I believe, Brother McGee, that fellow is at the bottom of this whole thing; let's go right back to your house, and accuse him of it to his face, and tell him he shall find the child, and deliver it to us, and if he don't—"

"What, then, Brother Blowhard?"

"What, then? Why, let's drive him out of the settlement."

“I kind o’ don’t like to do that, seeing he’s at my house, Brother Blowhard, and is sich a good man.”

“Well, we’ll see whether he’s a good man; let’s ask him at once to come out squar and far; be on one side or the other. We are on the Lord’s side, and he that is not with us, is against us.”

“Will you break the news first to him, Brother Blowhard?”

“Yes. Come and let’s see him, and give him a chance to clear his skirts of this affair.”

They went back hastily to McGee’s, and found the agent reading a religious newspaper.

“Brother,” said Blowhard, standing before the agent, “this is a pretty piece of business; this is the reward we western people get for hospitality and Christian kindness.”

The agent looked up—“What’s the matter?”

“That child’s the matter.”

“Yes; I have been thinking of it,” said the agent, quite seriously, “since you left. My conscience is not quite at rest on the subject.”

“Brother, speak out with Christian frankness. We want to know, are you for us or against us?” said Blowhard. “Be a Christian out of the pulpit as well as in it. Are you for us or against us?”

“I don’t know that I exactly comprehend your question.”

“Are you for slavery or against it, is the question?”

“Your question is easily answered,” said the agent. “No man on earth has heard me say one word against slaveholding, in my preaching or in my prayers, or at any meeting of our society. And as for the denomina-

tion of which I am an humble member, if we had opposed slavery as the Quakers have done, the whole system would long ago have been overthrown in the United States. But our members buy slaves, and sell slaves, and hold slaves, and take the price of slaves, and put it into the Lard's treasury, and send it out to support our missionaries. We have a great work on hands, Brother Blowhard, even the pulling down of the strong-holds of sin, and Satan in Burmah, where the car of Juggernaut rides over its deluded victims, and slays them by thousands, and in breaking up the wicked systems of caste in India. Who would think, for a moment, that we will leave this great work of the Lard to turn aside to the weak and beggarly elements of this vain and transitory world? When you see a church, or body of churches, a whole denomination, north or south, who denounce all sins, but say nothing against slavery, write nothing against it, do not preach or pray against it, and have nothing to say on the subject, but to censure and denounce those who are opposed to slavery, believe me, brother, such church is on the side of slavery, and says to the whole world, and to God, and to angels, and to men, that it is right."

"Good," said McGee, slapping the agent on the shoulder, "I knowed, brother, that you are true grit."

"Well," said Blowhard, "I am satisfied. We really thought, sir, that you might have persuaded the woman to run off with her child."

"I—I—I persuade her to do such a thing as that, brother? What can you have seen, in my conduct, to warrant such a thought? What have you heard from me, that you so greatly wrong me?"

“ You walked out this morning in the direction of the house, and being as you heard the conversation between Brother Blowhard and me, we thought may be you might, in a moment of weakness, have dropped a hint to the woman, or her husband.”

“ Dear Brother McGee, dismiss from your heart all such petty prejudices. I have no such weakness. I walked out to meditate and pray. I assure you no one can be more cautious, than I am, about interfering with your own peculiar institutions. My hands are too full of the Lard’s business, to allow me to turn aside to the weak and beggarly elements of this vain and transitory world. Burmah is stretching forth her hands for help, and we have not the heart to refuse to hear her cry. We must break up and destroy the system of caste in India.”

The agent was a pock-marked Irishman, and after delivering himself of this, he raised his eyes, and said: “ Oh, no! both my hands are too full of the Lard’s work. I can not turn aside to the weak and beggarly elements of this vain and transitory world.”

The old woman who had spoken to him the day before—McGee’s mother-in-law, said: “ I’m only a poor old woman, and my opinion ain’t worth much; but, it ‘pears to me, if you allow me to say anything—”

“ Speak out, sister,” said the agent, blandly, “ speak out—we will listen to you with great pleasure.”

“ Well, then, it ‘pears to me, that being as old Minna is a Christian woman, it ain’t altogether safe to hurt her.”

“ Oh, Brother Bean, never mind granny,” said McGee; “ she’s always grumbling at something or

other. She's never satisfied until she's got something to complain of."

"I shall be very happy to hear what the good sister has to say," said Mr. Bean.

"Well, then," said the old woman, "it seems to me just as bad to SELL children, as to christen 'em."

"Oh, Granny, how you do talk. I am conscientiously opposed to infant baptism, as they call it."

"Yes," said the agent, "it fills the churches with unconverted people."

"Sister," said the agent, "understand me. Holiness to the Lard, is my motto in this life, and I don't wish to be understood as approving of this thing or opposing it either, for I am an agent, and my commission does not authorize me to interfere with any matters allowed by the laws of your state."

"Your commission, I trust sir, allows you to interfere with the things allowed by the laws of Burmah; does it not?"

"Yes, sister; but that is a country sitting in the darkness of heathenism, in the region of the shadow of death, where widows are burnt on the funeral pile of their husbands, and children are sacrificed to Juggernaut, and the horrible sin of caste crushes thousands to the earth."

The old woman sighed and picked up her ball of yarn. "Ain't there something in scripter that says a man must build up the broken walls of Jerusalem, afore his own house?"

"Yes, sister; Nehemiah told the Jews to do so. My hands are both full of the Lard's business, and—"

"Ah," said the old woman, interrupting him, "don't

the scripter say, 'If thou bringest thy gift to the altar, there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee,—leave there thy gift before the altar, and go and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift ?'"

"Yes, sister, it's part of the sermon on the mount."

"Hav'nt you filled your hands before you were commissioned to do so? We profess to follow the book jist as it reads. Won't it be better to go and be first reconciled and then offer your gift?"

"Brother Bean never mind Granny," said McGee, "she's never satisfied without she's something to find fault with."

"Well," said the old lady, "it 'pears to me, but I'me only a poor weak old woman, you know, and my opinion aint worth much, but it does 'pear to me that if all hands would jine for a few days, and put this slavery out of the way, that things would get along better in the church and in the country too. I think that Christians, if they go on as they are doing now, will make themselves a laughing stock to the whole world, and bring disgrace on religion through their conduct."

"That's jist like Granny," said McGee, "never mind her, she always goes on so."

"My dear sister," said the agent, "I highly respect your opinions, and have no doubt of your honesty in entertaining and expressing them; but you should know that if slavery were disturbed, it might dissolve this glorious union, and ruin all the religion in the land."

"I don't know," said the old lady, "I will not risk my union with my glorious Savior. All must be right thar first. Thar's no threats in the scripter against treating people better than they deserve, and thar's a

good many against treating them worse. It's better I think, to be on the safe side."

"Obedience to the laws," said Brother Bean.

"Amen," said Blowhard.

"Brother," said Blowhard, "it really does my soul good to be here. For all you are a Calvinist and I am not, Christians have sympathy with each other. Brother McGee, we've been trying, you know, in this settlement for the last year, to have union prayer meetings, and other religious exercises; but somehow we never have got together, and now this little affair has brought us into unity. Now, brother, what I propose is, that we have a grand union of Christians to hunt up this woman and her child, so that the bargain between us may be carried out in good faith, on both sides."

"Agreed," said McGee. "I'll git all my friends to turn out, and I do think, too, that in such a cause as this, even the unconverted will lend us a helping hand."

"Yes, I'me sure of that," said Blowhard. "There's Job Steel and his crew; they can all be counted on, to a man, and there are others of the same sort who I'm sure will help us."

"Yes," said the old lady, again laying her knitting down in her lap. "Yes, they will help you. But don't it look a little suspicious like that such people are on your side?"

"They would help put out a fire," said Blowhard, "and that would not prove it is wrong for Christians to put out a fire."

"Yes," said the agent, "such men are generally great patriots. The greatest patriots are they that drink the most whisky. It was so in Ireland and it is so in America."

"Ah!" said the old lady, talking apparently to herself, "This thing of parting mothers and their children, by Christian men, is a bad business. I am afeerd no good will come of it in this world, or in the next. I've been a member of the church forty years, come next May, and I've never seen anybody made the better by it. I've seen a good deal of it in the church, and out of it, in my time. It has always seemed to me that men and women, if they are black, and poor too, are still men and women, and that people as harms 'em have to answer for it some day."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE blind are, to some extent, compensated for their loss by the greater keenness of their remaining senses. Although neither McGee nor Blowhard spoke loud enough, apparently, for any to hear, except those who were very near them, yet the quick sense of Minna caught something that alarmed her. She could not hear the words, nor get the whole meaning. She heard enough, however, to know that something might be done which the actors did not wish her to know, and with the natural apprehension of a mother for the safety of her child, she became alarmed. She was too cunning to betray her fear, even by a change of countenance.

Isham and Minna, as soon as they reached their humble home, made preparations to leave it forever. They tied their household goods and clothing in bundles, leaving the few articles they were unable to take with them and fled to the mountains ; Minna carrying the baby and Isham so heavily laden with bundles of clothing and household goods, that he reeled and staggered as he walked. It was night, but Isham knew every path in the woods, and as for Minna, day and night were alike to her.

A few white fleecy clouds were floating across the sky. They walked slowly through the forrest, and came to a deep ravine, at the bottom of which a stream of water dashed along, over stones and rocks and fallen trees. The banks on each side were so very steep that

their only means of crossing the ravine was a tree that had fallen over it. Isham had often crossed it by daylight, but now he had to encounter the perilous task of doing so when he could hardly grope his way in the darkness, and of taking over, if he could, his blind wife and their child. He crept slowly on his hands and knees along the log, and returned. He then took over his child and came back for Minna. He led her across, and they reached the other side in safety. Their goods had now to be brought over. After two or three trips, this was safely done.

A drizzling rain set in, and, cold and wet, they pursued their tedious journey. The pattering of steps was heard sometimes behind them, at other times among the bushes by their side, and not far from them. At length they came to a place where a high rock almost overhung the path on one side, and on the other was a precipice fretted with projecting rocks, and extending a hundred feet below them. Two glaring eye-balls, and a low, sullen growl, announced to Isham that their passage was disputed by a panther. The animal lay directly in the path. True, they could retreat, but that would embolden it, and perhaps cause the destruction of one of them. They could shout, but that might alarm some white persons, and ensure their capture and the loss of their child. Isham laid down his bundle, and told Minna to be firm and still, and crept on his hands and knees, with his eyes firmly fixed on the eyes of the panther. It remained firm, uttering low growls, and lashing its sides with its tail, till he had crept within twenty feet of it—then it uttered a loud yell and fled.

They soon reached the top of a hill, and Isham half whispered, "Thar it is."

"Thar's what?" said Minna.

"Thar's our new home. We'll get there in half an hour."

"Thank God," said Minna. "Thank God, we'll rest soon, and be safe. Our little baby will be safe."

There was on the west side of one of the hills of the chain of the Cumberland mountains, a thick and almost impenetrable cluster of bushes, over-shaded by large oak trees. Great rocks were piled on the mountain side, in some places over-shadowing a stream of clear water that dashed and sparkled at the base of the mountain. A narrow path—so steep and narrow that a goat could hardly climb it—wound from the foot of the mountain among these rocks, till it terminated at the mouth of a cave, which was just behind the dense cluster of undergrowth. Up this path, carrying his child on his left arm, and with Minna holding to his coat, Isham toiled, with slow and cautious steps—now stopping to rest for a moment or two behind a cluster of bushes, and again cheering his wife, with half whispered words of encouragement, until the cave was reached. It was a narrow opening, about four feet high, and three feet wide, in a great lime stone rock. The aperture increased in width as you entered the cave. The entrance was almost concealed by the shrubs that grew before it, and by a great grape vine that climbed up the side of the rock, whose branches, spreading far and wide, were twisted over the trees and shrubs about it. Isham had often visited the place before. It had sometimes been a safe place of temporary concealment for fugitive slaves, and the few persons who knew of its existence, carefully avoided speaking of it in the hearing of white persons.

The cave expanded as it extended into the mountain,

until, at the distance of twenty feet from the mouth, it made a large room. A mass of fallen rocks obstructed further advance into it. Into this the fugitives entered, and here, for the present, they made their hiding place and home. The darkness and the light were both alike to Minna, and Isham's care in providing for his family caused him to be absent nearly all day. They soon made their home as comfortable as their little stock of furniture enabled them.

One day, when it was raining so that Isham could not go abroad, he busied himself among the fallen stones that obstructed farther entrance into the cave, and after a few hours of hard labor, opened a narrow passage. Encouraged by his success, he worked on at intervals, until the whole passage was cleared, and he could go with his wife and child as far into the cave as they wished. This increased their chances of safety, as the cave as yet had not been fully explored, and might contain recesses and hiding places in which they would be secure.

Minna's love for her child, great as it was before, was increased by the hazard of being separated from it. She sat all day with the baby on her lap, and passed her hands over its face, and held its little hands in hers, and hummed, in half suppressed words, her lullabys to it, as she rocked it on her knee. "It was," she said, "the child of her old age, which God had given to comfort her in her affliction, and fugitives as they were, and hiding in rocks and among mountains, from the face of their fellow men,—they were happy."

Isham found full employment in procuring food and such comforts as he could for his little family. Although he was a free man, there was danger that his wife and

child would be taken if his hiding place should be discovered. He therefore had to be as careful to avoid discovery as if he himself was a slave.

He had in his character a strange mixture of simplicity and shrewdness, of knavery and kindness. It has already been stated that he was a doctor and a conjuror. By the last character he gained great power over the minds of some of his associates, not only among the black people, but the ignorant whites who knew him supposed that he could tell fortunes, make love philters, and cure consumptions and cancers, and even cure people who were bewitched. Isham claimed for himself all these powers, and a great many more. Indeed, nothing could be named that he did not profess to know more about it than any one else. No remedy for diseases could be produced, however speedy and sure in its effects, but Isham claimed to have one better and speedier, and surer. He sometimes preached, and at other times professed to be a prophet.

He was singularly kind and attentive to his wife. She had been blind about six years. Before she was seized with the small pox, which produced it, Isham had been a careless and bad husband; but after that event his whole conduct changed, and no one could have been more careful, and delicate and tender toward a wife, than Isham was to Minna. He would walk by her side with his arm around her waist, for hours, and entertain her at all times with cheerful conversation. All her little wants were promptly attended to, and as far as he could do so, with his slender means, her every wish was gratified. The baby was an unfailing source of happiness to both of them, and tender and delicate as Isham had been in his attentions to his wife before, these at-

tentions seemed to be now more tender and unremitting than they had ever been.

This very solicitude for the happiness of his wife, was one of the causes of his knavery. He knew that he had power over the minds of others, more ignorant than himself, and he now determined to turn it to the most profitable use—for the purpose of supplying the wants of his family and himself.

He had a cane, on the top of which he had carved the figure of a man's head. By some springs, which worked when he pressed his thumb on the back of the head, the eyes would roll, and the lips open, and Isham told his visitors that the image gave commands, and as he only could hear what it said, he was the interpreter. At other times he told them that the image prescribed remedies for their diseases, and told their fortunes, and uttered prophesies.

At first he intended carefully to conceal from all persons, both black and white, the hiding place of himself, and wife, and child; but he soon found that it was useless to attempt to do so. He could not procure food enough for them, unless by the aid of the blacks in his neighborhood. He, therefore, made his hiding place known to a chosen friend, and accompanied his disclosure with a statement, that his prophet had assured him that, whoever betrayed the secret, should die within three days after he did so.

Many long journeys were made to the cave in the night, by slaves from the surrounding country. Some came for love philters, others to have their fortunes told, others to be cured of rheumatism, and others to have some difficult passage of Scripture, which puzzled them, explained. Each carried with him a small pres-

ent, a chicken, or a duck, or a pig stolen from his master, or a small sum of money, or what was always acceptable, a flask of whisky, and Isham sent each man home satisfied with his bargain.

In exploring the cave, he had found a little recess by the side of the main entrance, in which he kept a small fire always burning to light the place, and around it were hung dried herbs, and roots, and dead snakes, and lizards, and toads. This was the apartment into which his visitors were generally taken at midnight, and where, seated upon the ground, with his legs crossed like a Turk, he consulted his oracle, and prescribed for his patients.

The personal appearance of Isham, aided not a little in his impostures. He was about sixty years of age, and very black, with a small, bald head, and a long, white beard that extended to his breast, his chin came almost to a point, and his eyes, which were bright black, were deeply set in his head, and glared like snake's.

After they had been two weeks at the cave, their wants were abundantly supplied. Pigs, poultry, opossums, and raccoons, and bread, and, indeed, whatever they needed, either for food or clothing, they had enough of, and to spare. Isham now passed his days within the cave, pounding and mixing his herbs, and roots, and snakes, and lizards for medicine for his patients. By his directions, herbs and roots were gathered, and brought to him by his visitors. His flight into the cave, and his mysterious life there, increased his fame, as a doctor and a fortune-teller, and, it was thought, made his remedies more effectual, and his prophecies more sure of being fulfilled. One prescription, especially among the young, greatly enlarged

his practice. Abe's wife had died, and he had wooed for six long weeks a hard-hearted slave girl, who only laughed at his awkwardness, in return for his affection. He came, with a stolen pig under his arm, to Isham, and stated his complaint.

"Leave that to me," said Isham, "I'll give her in jist sich a dose, as will kill or cure her in two days." He mixed the potion, and told Abe how to administer it. The directions were cautiously followed, and the girl, after lingering a week, apparently at the point of death, became the wife of Abe.

He told one man, who complained to him of the cruelty of his master, that in two weeks he would run away, and follow the north-east course of the mountains, until he got to the land of freedom. Within the time appointed, the man did run off, and no one in the neighborhood ever heard of him again.

But, some of his prophesies failed. He predicted, with great confidence, that an earthquake would destroy a neighboring village, and told the day and the hour when it would occur. The day came, but not the earthquake; the village yet stands.

Isham explained it all to the satisfaction of his friends.

"My wife, you know, is a Christian, and has great power in prar, and the Lord, for her sake, spared that town a little longer."

Minna, indeed, was, in her humble way, and according to the small light she had, a Christian. She did not know the full extent of her husband's wickedness. She knew that he was a doctor, and supposed the articles he obtained were fees for his services in that business. He carefully concealed his fortune telling,

and his prophecies from her. To do so he had selected another and a distant apartment from hers, in which he received his patients. He told her that his reasons for doing so were, that he was afraid her presence there would be discovered, if she was seen by many persons, and that the child would be taken from her. Many persons visited Isham who did not know that he had a wife and a child, and others, who did know it, supposed they were conceaeld in the neighborhood, but not in the cave.

A select and trusty few only, in whom he could confide, knew that his wife and child were there, and were permitted to see them.

CHAPTER XX

Two men came one bright morning to Rashleigh's. One of them, James Stebbins, was a lame tailor; the other, Ben Minter, was a farmer. They knocked at the door, and, upon the invitation of the man who opened it, went into the dining-room. The tailor was without his coat, and had his measure around his neck. The farmer kept his hands in the pocket of his pantaloons, and his hat on the side of his head.

"We want to see your boss," said Stebbins.

"The what, sir?" said Jinks.

"The old man."

"Mr. Rashleigh, sir?"

"Yes; tell him we're here on mighty important business, and he must come right away."

Jinks looked alarmed, and left the room.

The farmer sat down on a sofa, and began to whistle.

"My master," said Jinks, "will see you in a minute or two."

"Your master?" said Minter; "your master?"

"Yes, sir," said Jinks. "I am a servant to Mr. Rashleigh."

"A servant," said the little tailor, staring at him, "a servant—ain't you a white man?"

"Yes; I am an Hinglishman."

Mr. Rashleigh was heard approaching, and Jinks gladly withdrew.

"Good morning, neighbor," said Stebbins, extending

his hand to Rashleigh. "I'm glad to see you looking so well to-day. This gentleman here is Mr. Minter."

Rashleigh bowed to Mr. Minter, and invited his visitors to be seated.

"No, thank you," said Stebbins, "we're in something of a hurry. We heard that you said the next time thar was a hunt in the neighborhood, you'd like to have a hand in it."

"Yes, sir," said Rashleigh. "I do want to take part in a hnnt, and am glad you have informed me that one is about to take place. When will it occur?"

"To-morrow, at ten o'clock in the morning, we meet at Mr. Norton's, and start from thar to scour the country."

"Ah, indeed! I am glad to hear it, and will not, I assure you, be the last person at the rendezvous. I am quite fond of the sport. Have you good hounds?"

"No; we can't get any dogs."

"How! do you hunt in this country without hounds? In England they are regarded as indispensable. The fox will surely escape unless we have dogs to pursue it."

"We ain't going to hunt no fox," said Stebbins, "we are arter bigger game nor that."

"Ah, deer! I suppose," said Rashleigh; "I have never taken part in such a chace, but shall be delighted to learn it here, where, I have no doubt, the art is carried almost to perfection. I see, now, you can well enough dispense with hounds on such excursions. I will, I assure you, do the best I can, on this occasion, though I fear that, from my inexperience, I shall contribute but little toward the success of the day."

"No," said Stebbins, "we ain't a going to hunt no deer, nother."

“What then?” said Rashleigh.

“A nigger. We have the honor to be the committee to invite you, Mr. Rashleigh, in behalf of the people of this settlement, to take a hand in it.”

“Invite me!” said Rashleigh, his eyes flashing, and his face flushed, “to take a part in hunting a fugitive negro? How dare you cross my door, and stand before my face on such an errand? I invite you to leave my house, and shall be greatly surprised if you renew your visit before I return your call.

“Good morning. You have mistaken my character, if you suppose, for a moment, that I would take part in such an inhuman affair. I protest against it as a cruelty and a wrong to humanity.”

“Captain,” said Stebbins, “we meant no offense. We came here as neighbors, having heerd that you said you would like to jine the next hunt that came off in the settlement.”

“Your apology is accepted, sir. Good morning.”

“Captain, thar’s no occasion in takin’ on so,” said Minter, thrusting both his hands down to the bottom of his pantaloons’ pockets; “it don’t scare me a bit, and won’t do you no good, I can tell you that.”

“I am not a captain. I never held any office either civil or military.”

“Well, I guess it will be a long time afore you get one in this settlement; that’s all I’ve got to say. Good morning, Mr. Rashleigh.”

The committee went to another neighbor, Mr. Brandon.

“We have come, sir,” said Stebbens, “to invite you to take part in a hunt that’s to come off to-morrow.”

"I thank you, gentlemen, for your invitation, but I never hunted, and am now too old to learn."

"Oh, sir," said Minter, "Mr. Blowhard, the Methodist preacher has lost a nigger, and the neighbors are to collect and hunt it for him."

"I am very sorry, sir, to hear of the loss the reverend gentleman has sustained, and hope you will be successful in your pursuit. In other days some of my slaves have escaped, and I have been glad when they were recaptured. I have always liberally rewarded those who caught them for me. Mr. Blowhard, gentlemen, I hope, will reward you, if you bring back his slave."

"Oh, no, sir," said Minter, "he's already told us he's got nothing to pay for it, but in preachin'. We don't expect him to pay no money. It would be wrong, sir, to charge a preacher for such little lifts as that; but you come, sir, and take a hand in the sport?"

"No, sir. I have never taken part in such hunts, and, although my fortunes are greatly altered, I never will. No man, who knows me, would ever have invited me to join in such an affair."

"You say," said Minter, "that you have paid men for such services for you?"

"Yes, sir. I have paid men, too, for blacking my boots, and cleaning out my stables."

"You seem to think, some how, that it's beneath a gentleman to hunt for a nigger?"

"I do think so."

"Well, that's as good as saying we're not gentlemen. Ain't it?"

"No, sir. Upon that subject I am silent. All men have not been educated alike. Each man must be

controlled by his own views of propriety. All that I wish to say is, that I will take no part in such affairs. I wish, too, that the reverend gentleman may find his slave."

The committee called on many other persons in the neighborhood, and invited them to the hunt.

One man, whose aid they were sure of obtaining, as he was a member of the Methodist church, told them that Mr. Blowhard had better be saying his prars, than catching runaway negroes. Another, who was a Baptist, on whom, therefore, they relied, told them that Deacon McGee was disgracing the profession of religion, and ought to be expelled from the church ; and another man actually went so far, as to say, that for his part, he wished every negro in the state would run away, and that the man who brought the first one back migh be shot.

Still the committee went on with their work, and, at the appointed time, fifty men were at Norton's house, eager for the hunt.

The conduct of Rashleigh toward the committee, was, of course, duly reported, and aroused the indignation of the good people so much, that some of them proposed to pass by his house on the way to the hunt, and give that gentleman a coat of tar and feathers. Others said that that punishment was entirely too light, and hinted that somebody in that settlement needed hanging.

Norton, however, interfered, and said: "Neighbors, leave that matter to me. I've got a plan in my head that you will all approve of as soon as you know it. I can not tell it now, because that might defeat my purpose ; leave that thing to me, and I'll show you that

the old English aristocrat has his match in one man in this settlement."

The men acquiesced, and soon after started out on the hunt. They were divided into four bands. One party went north, the other south, the other east, and the last west, with directions to spread out as they advanced, and to leave no place unexamined in which it was possible for the fugitives to hide.

Norton went with the eastern band, and soon reached the mountains, and the cave which they entered, but found no trace or sign of the fugitives. Not a leaf of the dried herbs, that once hung upon the wall, not a feather of the poultry on which Isham and his family had feasted, not a foot print near the cave, other than those made by the hunters, was seen.

The walls of the cave, indeed, were blackened with smoke and ashes, and pieces of the charcoal were scattered over the floor, but it was supposed that the Indians sometimes came there and kindled fires in it.

At night the party again met at Norton's. He thanked them in behalf of the state for the zeal they had shown in the pursuit of the fugitives, and assured them that the safety of the state, and the happiness of their posterity to the latest generation, undoubtedly depended upon their preserving the institution of slavery.

Two barrels of whisky were brought out in the yard, and tin cups, and the gentlemen were invited to help themselves. A scene of rioting and drunkenness followed, in which Norton bore the chief part, too disgusting to be related, especially as it is not immediately connected with our story.

The precaution of Norton was the principal cause of

defeating the expedition. No effort was made to conceal the intended hunt from the colored people of the neighborhood, and long before the party set out, Isham was informed of their plans, and had fled with his wife and child. Others aided his flight and his concealment.

Another expedition was talked of, but was put off until the next spring, when Norton said it should be successful.

A few days after the hunt, the Rev. Mr. Blowhard was in fine health and spirits; but, after a hearty dinner, he was suddenly taken ill, and in two days was dead.

CHAPTER XXI.

THREE days after Tom Giles went away, as Mr. Strong was busily overlooking and arranging his papers, he heard a loud knocking at the door of his room, he supposed the house was on fire, ran to the door, and as he opened it, his hand was seized;

"How are you, squire; I'm mighty glad to see you agin."

"Why, Giles, I am surprised. Your visit is as unexpected as it is welcome. I feared that you had deserted me forever."

"Well, squire, I were scar'd—that's a fact; but I've bin thinkin' the hull thing over, and believe the 'Merican eagle is more nor twenty one years old, and kin take keer of hisself. The fact is, squire, that bird has always tuk good keer of hisself ever since he's bin hatched. Squire, how ken a book split the Union? It takes the people like me and my neighbors to do that. We've got to have a say about it, and I reckon it can't be done till a good many of us is willin' to it."

"You are right, Giles. The Union will never be divided until the people of the United States consent to it: but I hardly thought you would return. I am glad to see you."

"Well, well, squire, thar's more dangerous things in these parts, than splitting the Union."

"What, Giles?"

"Well, squire, I may as well tell you first as last. I went home with Jim Wilson. They all treated me mighty well, and were glad to see an old neighbor. Jim's got a sister livin' with him as has bin a widder six months, who has two boys and three gals. At first she didn't notice me hardly at all; but day afore yesterday I happened to say that I've made a hnndred and thirty-two dollars and thirty-seven and a half cents a showng my varmint here, (pointing to the badger lying in a basket at his feet,) and with that she began to pet the varmint—and to feed it—and tried to make it eat a lump of maple sugar, and made a new collar for it, though the old one were good enough, and said it were mighty pretty, and how she liked it. Squire, I'm sixty odd year old, and has bin a widower seven years come next March. I said nothing. Well, I were as perlite to the lady as I could be till last night, when I war complaining of a pain in my legs, and the widder wanted to int 'em with Shaker linament. She got a big bottle half full of white stuff, and shuk it up, and wanted me to let her int my legs. Squire, it were no use to pretend to be blind no longer, so I put her off as well as I could, and this morning I bid them all good-by and come away. The widder, squire, squeezed my hand when I shuk hands with her and smiled, and said she reckoned she'd see me agin in a day or two. I reckon she won't though, and I made no promises."

"Well, Giles, you have had a narrow escape. I congratulate you on your good luck."

The parties then renewed their agreement, and Strong went on with his work. He looked up in about an hour, and Tom Giles was asleep. He awakened

him ; "Giles, this won't do. I want you to hear all I read, that you may correct the errors, if any, in the statements."

"Go on, squire, you may depend on it, if any thing's wrong, I 'll wake up the minute you come to it, like a miller when his mill gets out of gear. I know by the run of the thing that it's all right, and I were kep awake nearly all night last night thinking of that widder trying to int my legs. Squire, having a widder runnin' arter you with a big bottle of Shaker linament—shaking it up as she runs, and tryin' to int your legs—is a heap worse nor dissolven the Union. Indeed it is, squire."

"Giles," said Mr. Strong, "there is something which I passed over while you were away. I wish you to hear it read so that it may be corrected, if it is not rightly stated."

The "squire" read the scene at the Baptist meeting-house: "Do you know anything about this, Giles?"

"Sartinly I do ; I war the head deacon in the church at that time, and stood by, and were an eye witness to the whole thing. But, squire, as you have it wrote down it is not right—it keeps back part of the truth. Why, squire, that buying of that baby by father Blowhard, was one of the blessedest things that ever a Methodist—mind what I say—a *Methodist* preacher done. I were trembling in my shoes for the peace of the church, and the prosperity of our Zion, (I mean our church on the Mud Fork Turkey Creek,) and wonderin' how in the world the thing would come out. Because, you see, if Brother McGee refused to let the Methodist sprinkle water—a little water on the child's face—mind

I don't call it baptisin', squire, which would only have washed its face, and done the little thing not a bit of harm, why, then, all the Methodists in the settlement would have set up a great outcry about it, and said how cruel it were to the poor mother of the child, and what a shame it war to treat a poor, old, blind christian woman so ; and 'ef brother McGee had gone and let 'em sprinkle it, then it would have been lettin' go the great pint agin infant sprinklin'. So I could not see, poor short-sighed mortal as I am, how the thing were to end. I were greatly consarned about it, and did not sleep well that night. And when I heerd, in the arternoon, next day, that Father Blowhard had bought the child, I jumped for joy, 'cause it settled the hull thing, and gin peace to the church, and prosperity to Zion on the Mud Fork of Turkey Creek. Both parties said they'd beat each other ; the Methodists said they'd carried their pint, and the Baptists said that Father Blowhard war afeer'd to argue the Scripter with McGee, and so backed out and bought the child. It made McGee so popular that he war made a delegate to the Holstein Association, and when Father Blowhard died, which he did soon arterwards, all the newspapers in the land said he were in heaven, and some of the Baptists even went to his funeral. And it were a great thing, squire, for Wash McGee, 'cause he got rich from that trade ; it gin him a start in the world."

"I do not see," said Strong, "McGee's name mentioned again in these papers ; please let me know what became of him."

"I can do that, squire, 'cause it war only four weeks ago last Thursday—let me see—no, it war last Friday, four weeks ago, that I war at their house in Memphis.

Wash McGee were my own brother-in-law ; he married my sister Katy. We all moved out here from North Carolina together. He sold that little nigger to old Father Blowhard, the Methodist preacher, that were in these parts, and got a hundred dollars cash in hand, and ten acres of land at Memphis. When he got the land we all thought it were not of much account ; but Wash, he said he would move out thar, because he said he could n't be much worse off thar, nor any whar else in this world, than he were here. So he tuk his money and his deed, and a new rifle that he was always bragging about, and went down the Tennessee River till he got into the Ohio, and then went down that till he got into the Mississippi, and then down to Memphis. When he got thar, thar was only a few log houses ; but people thar said thar was a great outcome for the place, and that them as got land thar and held on to it, would be rich. Wash McGee were great for holding on. He were always talking about the final parseverance of the saints. And he did hold on till the town grew up to a great place, and then he cut his ten acres into lots and sold them out for big prices, and got mighty rich. I only heard from him once in a great while, and then, arter awhile, I never got no more letters from him. Well, as I were coming here, only last month, I stopped at Memphis, and detarmined to find him. It was about eleven o'clock on Sunday morning when I got across the Mississippi, and as he were a deacon, I thought the quickest way to find him were to go right to the meeting-house. So I takes this here varmint in my basket, and goes straight thar. It was full of people, all dressed up in their Sunday best, and while I were standing at the door, a mighty friendly sort of man

came up to me, and whispered, 'Do you want a seat, sir. Says I to him, 'Yes, sir.' So he tuk me up into a loft, and I sat down on a bench, and looked round awhile on the people. Thar were a gang of youngsters up stars, and a queer looking fellow with big, black whiskers. The youngsters sung, and the queer fellow with the black whiskers played the fiddle. He was up to it, squire, and fiddled so well, that I looked to see what the preacher were about; but he sat still, and looked mighty serious all the time, jist as if thar weren't nary fiddle in ten mile of him. Arter awhile he got up to preach, and bein' as he were not a Baptist, I went to sleep."

"When I woke I looked up, and there was the fiddler man, with black whiskers, a standing straight up, with his fiddlestick in his hand, pointing to pussey, who had crept out of the basket, and were walking on the rail that runs round the edge of the loft, and all the gals in the loft war a laughing and putting their handkerchers in their mouths, and the preacher were standin' still a looking at the badger, and all the people in the meetin' house were a lookin' up at it and me, and the women that were under the varmint while he were walking on the rail, were getting up and going to other parts of the meeting house. I were scared, Squire, and so I jist got up, and with this the varmint started on the run, but the rail were smooth, and slippery, and he fell off, but I cotch the eend of the chain and held on to it. He gin a loud squeel as he went over, all the people below made a rush to get out of the way. The varmint kicked terribly, but I pulled him up to me. I were afeard his neck were broke, and war mighty

glad to find that he war'nt hurt much, but mighty scared he was, I tell you, Squire.

"One old lady tuk a fit, and two or three screamed out loud.

"It wouldn't a happened, Squire, only for the fiddler, with black whiskers. He shuk his fiddle stick at the varmint, and said hiss, in a kind of half whisper, between his teeth, and he were so ugly that the poor thing got scared, and no wonder, for his face were enough to scare a man, let alone a poor varmint like a badger.

Arter that I sot down a while, but I were so uncomfortable that I concluded to go out—so I tuk the basket on my arm, and with the varmint in it, went out and sot down on the steps of the meetin' house till meetin' let out. I wanted to tell the preacher whose fault it were, and to ask for Wash McGee, when the meetin' let out, which it did very soon that day. I axed all the people that come out if they know'd Wash McGee, and told 'em he were my own brother-in-law, and his wife were my own sister, Katy. Nobody seemed to know anything about him till I told a whole crowd around me that he used to live near Chattanooga, and bought ten acres of land in Memphis, at an early day, and then an old nice looking grey harred gentleman, with a gold headed cane and gold spectacles, said I must be enquiring for Col. George Washington McGee.

Yes, says I, I did hear that he got to be Colonel, and his name is George Washington McGee, and his wife's name is Katy, she's my own sister. The nice old gentleman told me that Col. McGee had been dead

six year, but his widow and part of the family were living in Memphis. A boy came up and said he would go along with me and show me their house. I told the nice looking old gentleman that I were much obleeged to him and shuk hands with him, and bid the people good-bye, and went with the boy. He were a nice little boy, and as we went along, he told me what great people the McGees were, and that they were so rich that they kept a barl of change—gold dollars and halves and quarters and ten cent pieces and cents, all mixed up together, in the closet under the stars by the side of the sugar barl, and whenever any one of them wanted change they jist went to the barl and shoveled up in a tin scoop that was in it, as much as they wanted—gold dollars and quarters and half dollars and dimes all mixed up together, and that when one barl gin out, they got another from the bank, so as always to keep plenty of change on hand. The boy said that it were very nice, and that when he got to be a man he meant to do so too in his house, but that he would allers keep the door locked and let his wife tote the key.

“We got pretty soon to a great big brick house that stands back in a yard with a great many trees and little bushes all about it, and a wall round the yard, and a big iron gate in front, and a nice walk kivered with shells up to the front door. We went in and the boy rung the bell, and while we were waiting at the door I let him have one more look at the badger (for I kept it kivered up with a check apron in the basket) to pay him for his trouble in shewing me the house. He told me good-bye and went away.

“A nigger man came to the door and I went in—the fellow axed my name and who I wanted to see. I

telled him my name is Tom Giles, and that I come thar to see the hull family. He went away and left me standing at the door, and bye-and-by a young fellow came. He had on white pants with red stripes running down outside right here whar thar sewed, Squire, (pointing to the seam,) and red shoes on his feet. He had a bunch of black harr on his chin, but as soon as I laid eyes on him I knew he must be Wash McGee's son, for he looked exactly like his father when we was young men together, all but the little bunch of black harr that hung down on his chin like a goat's beard. He tuk me in a back room, and said, bein as it were Sunday, the ladies, in course, had gone out a riding. I axed him for his mother that is my sister Katy, and he said she were up starrs. So we went up starrs and away to the back part of the house, and he opened a door and we walked in, and thar sot my sister Katy as natural as life, smoking her pipe jist as she used to do, and not a bit changed 'cept that she were older and her harr were grey. She looked at me for a minute and said, 'Bless my stars, if thar aint my brother Tom—how arr you, Tom? I am mighty glad to see you.' I sot down, and pretty soon a nigger brought me some dinner, and I gin some to the badger, but the poor thing was so scared it had 'nt no appetite to eat.

" We sot and talked over old times till it was time to go to bed, and then they tuk me to a nice room and I had a sound sleep, only I had a bad dream about the black whiskered fiddler and the preacher and people in the meetin' house, and thought the fiddler wanted to kill my badger. Next morning a nigger fetched me some hot water and a razor for to shave and wash my-

self, and when done he went afore me to show me the way to breakfast. We went along a passage and down one set of starrs and then down two more and then went back along another passage till we got to whar the victuals was, and there sot William Henry Harrison McGee, the young man I saw the day before, and two gals, my nieces ; one of 'em is a widder. Her husband had been a doctor, and died and left her a sight of money besides what she had of her own. The other was a young gal only about sixteen or seventeen year old. Mrs. Webler, the widder, looked kind a scornful at me, but the rest was mighty friendly and glad to see their uncle.

“ Soon arter I sot down to breakfast, a nigger boy came and told William Henry Harrison McGee that some gentleman war in thar parlor and wanted for to see him. He sent word back that he were eating his breakfast and would be thar in a minute or two, and the little nigger come back and said the gentleman couldn’t wait a minute, and wanted to see him right away. So he got up and went to the room whar they war, in sich a hurry that he left the door a little open arter him, and I could hear some words they war a saying to him. They war a talkin about me and my badger, and what tuk place at the church the day before, and they all laughed as loud as they could. I heard William Henry Harrison McGee say, ‘ He’s my own uncle, my mother’s brother—gentleman, and no mistake, and while he’s here I mean to treat him as a gentleman should be treated.’ Bye-and-by, they all went away and William Henry Harrison come back to finish his breakfast. His face were red with laughing, and he could not help laughing when he come

back; but for my part, I thought it war not a thing to laugh at, being as my badger had like to broke its neck, and had no appetite to eat, and if it died I would be ruined. He sot down and said, 'Well, uncle, you were at church yesterday, as a good Christian should be.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'I were thar.'

"'You took your badger with you, I've heard.'

"'Yes, I allers does so, 'cause I's afeard to trust it out of my sight for fear of an accident; somebody might steal it.'

"'An accident did happen, yesterday, to it—did'nt it.'

"'Yes, a little one,' I said, 'but nothing to speak of, I were afeard its neck were broke, but I gin it some water this mornin and find it can swallow. It will be well enough to show in a few days here, and then I mean to show it to the people in Memphis.'

"William Henry Harrison McGee told his sisters all that tuk place at the meetin' house, the day before, and a good deal more, too. He made things worse nor it were. He laughed fit to kill himself when he told it, and Kitty McGee laughed too, and the nigger boy that waited on the table, he had his eyes open at first so wide that they looked white and he shewed his whole set of teeth from ear to ear, and then about the eend of it laughed out as loud as he could, and laid down and rolled on the carpet, but Mrs. Webler tuk pity on it, and never laughed at all but were serious and serious till Harrison got through, and then turned a sort of green and gave one loud scream and fell back on the floor in a 'steric fit. She took it harder nor I did and had more pity on the poor varmint nor I had

myself. In course all laughing stopped then. The rest of them were young and never seemed to think how bad the poor varmint must have felt when it war a hanging in the meetin' house, and kicking for life, but they were youngsters and I excused 'em on that account. Mrs. Webler were older and had more thought and more pity. She come too arter a while, and then Harrison said, 'How soon, uncle, do you intend to shew your badger in Memphis?' I said, 'as soon as it gets well and sound, which I reckon it will by day arter to morrow. Jist as I said that, Mrs. Webler were taken with another fit worse nor the first one. She must have thought me mighty cruel to be a shew-ing of the varmint so soon arter the accident, but she war wrong thar, for it war'nt hurt badly at all.

"I walked about the town the next day. A great many gentlemen met me in the street and axed me if I were Col. McGee's brother-in-law, and I told 'em I were, and that I were goin' to open a show, and axed 'em to come and see my badger; and 'most all of 'em said they would.

"Sometimes ladies met me in the street, and turned round and looked arter me, and then one said to the other, that's the man that's got a badger; he's Mrs. Dr. Webler's uncle. I must own up to it, Squire, I were a little—jist a little, you see, proud of my rich kin-folks, and liked to see so many people lookin' arter me. The boys followed along behind me and talked about my badger. I heard some of 'em say they saw it in meetin', but meant to see it agin as soon as the show opened, and others said they wished they had been to meetin' that day. I thought when I did open I would have a great run, and get crowds of people to

come to see it, and would take in a sight of money. I met a man that had a string of fish for sale, and we had a long talk together, I told him what I were goin to do. He allowed I had better advertise, but I told him I could not spare money enough to put the advertisement in the public prints. He then told me the best way for me to do was to write advertisements and stick 'em up in the town, and said he would help me as soon as he sold his string of fish. I went about with him from one house to another, till at last he got half a dollar for his fish, and then we got some paper and wrote the advertisements. Here's one of 'em, squire, that I've kep to copy off at other places where I want to put it out again. So saying, he laid on the table a paper, of which the following is a copy :

FOR SHO;
A TAME BADGER.

OPEN 2 DAYS. 'MITTANSE 5 SENTS; CHILDREN 3 SENTS.

tosgiLes.

"We could not say whar the show were to be, so we left that out till I could get a good place.

"That night, at supper, I pulled out one of the papers and shewed it to William Henry Harrison McGee. He put a little round glass, in a gold frame, up to his eye, and read it twice over. He then handed it to his sister, and she read it, and then she handed it to Mrs. Webler, and as soon as she read it, she turned green in the face, and came nigh having another fit. She looked cross at me, and said: 'Are you going to show that beast in Memphis?'

"I said, 'Yes, honey.' It won't hurt it a bit. It's got over all its pains in the neck. Don't take on so,

and think I'm cruel to the varmint. I like it most as well as if it were my own child. I catch'd it young, and have raised it by hand.

"As soon as I said so, William Henry Harrison, McGee, and his little sister laughed, but Mrs. Webler looked mighty serious.

"She must have thought her Uncle were a hard hearted man.

"Arter supper little Katy came up to whar I was setting in my sisters room, and said: 'We are going out a riding in the carriage for an hour this evening, and I want to take your badger along to give it an airing. The night breezes are refreshing and will do it good.'

"I thanked her for her kindness, and were jist a goin' to hand her the basket with the varmint in it, when sister Katy pulled my arm, and said: 'Brother Tom, if you let it go out of your sight, you'll never see it again; the 'll drown the badger sure as you are a living man;' and as she said so, little Katy bust out in a loud laugh, and ran away.

"'Tom,' said my sister to me, 'you don't know these youngsters yet; they are full of mischief. Do n't you trust any body in this house, but yourself, with that badger; if you do, it will disappear, and you'll never know what has 'come of it.'

"'Why, how can they be sich bitter inemies to a creater that never hurt a harr of their heads, Katy?' I said to my sister.

"She shook her head, and said: 'Mind, Tom, what I tell you; they are my own children, and I know 'em better nor you.'

"'Yes, but it looks so spiteful and cruel in them to want to drown'd a poor critter that never did them nor

any body else any harm. But, as for Mrs. Webler, I'm sure she has no hand in it.'

"Arter awhile little Katy came back, and said: 'Uncle Tom, won't you sell your dear little badger to me. I'll give you twenty dollars for it.' But I told her so many nice gentlemen had axed me when I were goin' to show it, and said they were most dying to see it, that I could not dissappint 'em. My word was out, I said, and they must see it; if it were not for that, I believe I would take twenty dollars for it, to obleege her. But I would let her have it arter the show. She said she would not want it when every body had seen it."

"Mr. Giles," said Strong, "where are the other children of Wash McGee?"

"Oh, George Washington McGee is a young man—rather an oldish sort of a young man though, and he's gone to forrin' parts a secretary of legation, and Pola Bonaparte McGee has a great turn for making money, and buys and sells niggers. Sister Katy told me he's got mighty rich at the business.

"Wall, as I was tellin' you, squire, next mornin', at breakfast, I inquired whar was the best place to open my show. I told 'em some people said thar was a good place close down by the court-house; but most told me that the meetin'-house steps would be the place whar the biggest crowd could be got together. As soon as I begun to talk about the thing, Mrs. Webler got straight up and left the room. She could n't bar to hear me talk about making a show of the poor critter so soon arter the accident. Its neck were a little crooked still, and may be she saw it. Well, squire, the rest of us had the whole talk to ourselves, and William Henry

Harrison McGee says to me, 'Uncle Tom, I mean to help you in this thing. This is your house as long as you please to stay with us, which I hope will be a good while. You need not be at the expense of hiring a room to open your show in. If you show the badger at the meeting-house steps, the boys will crowd around, and get on the steps behind you, and see it for nothing, and so cheat you.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'half the town has seen it already at the meetin'-house, but they has not seen any of the antics it ken play, and never will till they pay for the sight.'

"'Uncle,' says William Henry Harrison McGee, jist come with me; I 'll show you a room that will suit you exactly,' and then we got up and he took me to the back parlor, all full of nice chairs and sofas, and fine things. 'This is the best place you can get to show it in.'

"'What!' says I, 'in this fine room?'

"'Yes,' says he, 'this is the place I have determined on it, after due deliberation. Katy and I have agreed on it, and we are in the majority, you know. Mrs. Webler is opposed to your shewing it any whar in Memphis.'

"'Poor, soft hearted woman,' says I, 'she must think the critter is worse hurt nor it is. I 'll jist take it in and show it to her.'

"'No; don't, Uncle, don't; if you do, she will go into fits,' said little Katy.

"'Why, it is a right pretty critter, and tame, and won't bite at all. She need not be scared.'

"'Ah, Uncle,' said William Henry Harrison McGee, 'women are so curious.'

“‘Yes,’ I said, ‘some of them are tender hearted as chickens, ’specially city ladies. Your mother, that’s my sister Katy, wasn’t so when she was a gal.’

“‘Well, Uncle, the thing is fixed. This room is your own; put up your advertisements, and I’ll go out and drum up a crowd to come to the show.’

“I got a barl head, and writ on it—BADGER FOR SHO HERE. ’Mittance 5 cents; children 3 cents, and fastened it on the front door, high up, so as anybody walking along the street could see it.

“Arter awhile Harrison came back with three young ladies. They wanted to get in the room without paying the ’mittance fee, but he would n’t let ’em.

“They paid at last and come in, and I tuk the varmint out of the basket, and shewed it to ’em. He put his glass to his eye, and looked at it, and said his Uncle Tom’s badger was mighty pretty; and that it was a pity its neck were crooked. The ladies ’mired it, and praised it very much, and I axed ’em to recom-
ment it to their friends to call and see it, and they all said they would be sure to do so. They went away, and others came, ladies and gentlemen, till nearly dinner time, when it slacked off awhile; but in the ar-
noon there were a perfect rush; the room were full of ladies and gentlemen, and I made the badger stand on its hind legs, and play all its antics. I got lots of money. Some would n’t take a cent of change back when they paid me a ten cent piece; and one nice young lady gave me a gold dollar, and said the whole thing was so funny, that she could not take a cent of change, it were worth two dollars to be thar and see it.

“Arter nearly all the company had gone away, Wil-

iam Henry Harrison McGee put his little round glass up to his eye, and said, to a young gentleman that were standin' by him, 'I say, Mr. Jinkins, that badger is a beautiful creeter—ain't it.'

"Mr. Jinkins said: 'Indeed you may say that, Mr. McGee. It makes my heart beat with joy to look at it.' I were mighty pleased, squire, to hear 'em talk so of my varmint, and looked at it myself, and really thought the animal were prettier than ever I had seen it afore.

"Then William Henry Harrison McGee says: 'Mr. Jinkins I've a project in my head.'

"'What is it?' says Mr. Jinkins.

"'Why, this,' says William Henry Harrison McGee, 'that you and me take a turn with my Uncle here when he goes into the country, and help to show the beautiful animal. We'll get a hand organ, and you'll play the organ, and I'll stand at the door and take the money, and my Uncle here will be inside, and show the badger.'

"Mr. Jinkins studied a little, and put his fore finger up to his nose, and said: 'Wouldn't it be better to take it turn about in playing the organ.'

"'No,' says William Henry Harrison McGee, 'every man should follow the bent of his genius. You have a talent for music, and I have a talent for money. Every man to his calling, Mr. Jinkins, and then the world will get along better.'

"'Yes,' says Mr. Jinkins, 'but I aint got no talent for hand organs.'

"Indeed, my dear sir, you do yourself injustice. You were born with a talent for hand organs which has

been buried in a napkin ; all that is wantin' is that it should be developed.'

"And then they agreed to go with me ; Mr. Jinkins were to play the hand organ, and William Henry Harrison McGee to take the money at the door, and me to make the badger stand on his hind legs, and shew his antics afore the assembled multitude when they come to the show.

"I thought the next day I would make a little fortune, and got every thing ready for a great crowd, and sot in the back parlor and listened to hear the bell ring. One hour passed and then another and then another, and nobody came a near. Arter a while little Katy came in and talked a while and went away half laughing ; then the little nigger waiter boy come in and he looked and grinned and went out, and then nobody else came. I wondered what on airth were the matter. At last I took my badger up to sister Katy's room and asked her to take keer of it for me. She said, 'Brother Tom, you need not be afraid now, they will not kill your badger—all danger is over.' Then I went out to see what was the matter, and don't you think, squire, William Henry Harrison McGee had took down my sign from the front door and put a picce of crape on his left arm, and gin out in speeches that my badger—it were dead. He walked all over the town with the crape on his arm, looking very mournful and saying he felt as if one of his kin folks were departed.

"As I were coming back to the house, I saw a lady meeting me. I looked at her, and bless my stars, it were Mrs. Webler, that I thought were sick abed. As soon as I saw her I knew she had a raging fever—her

face were so red. So I met her and said, 'You ought'nt to be out when you are so sick; you are burning up with a fever; your cheeks is as red as fire, and when you are home they are always so pale.' She tried to get past me without speaking, and I were more convinced that the fever war preying on her vitals. 'You ought to be bled, Mrs. Webler; indeed you ought,' I said to her, 'and here's a doctor's shop close by; do come in and get bled.' But she looked jist as red as ever, and then she tried to run. So I caught her up in my arms and were totin' her to the doctor's shop to be bled, for I saw she were out of her head. She screamed and struggled, and a crowd of people got round us and tuk her away from me, and while I were talking to some of them she slipped off and went home. One young feller said she were only painted. That made me mad, squire. It were scandalizing a woman, my own sister's child, and I could not stand it. It were equal to calling Mrs. Webler a squaw, and I hit him for it. A constable tuk me up and the hull crowd followed along till we come to a Squire's office, and they proved that I hit the feller. I told the Squire what I did it for, and he laughed and all the people laughed, and the squire said I must fine you a dollar and cost; so I had to pay the man nigh two dollars afore I got off, which I did, all in five cent pieces. I axed the squire to fine the feller for saying my niece were painted, but he only laughed and would not do it.

"I went out of the place after I had paid the man nearly all the five cent pieces I had about me. I were mad, squire. As I were walking away, a young feller came up and axed me when my badger's funeral were to be, and whether it was to be tuk to the church afore

it were buried, and if it didn't die from a sore neck? I thought he were trying to poke fun on me, and was jist about to hit him, but I remembered the fine I had jist paid, and a cold shiver ran all over me, and I let him be.

"When I got back to the house, they told me Mrs. Webler were very sick and in bed. I know'd she had a fever when I met her. If she had been bled, she would have been well by that time. So I told my sister that arter dinner I would take my badger out in town and show it, for I said I couldn't afford to be idle when I could make so much money by showing it.

"Arter awhile Mrs. Webler sent me a twenty dollar gold piece, and asked if I would take that and not show it any more in that town. I saw she was a kind-hearted woman, and tuk great pity on the poor thing, and I tuk the money.

"Next mornin' I bid 'em all good-by. Mrs. Webler said, 'Good-by, Uncle, I suppose we will never see you again: It will be too much out of the way for you to come to Memphis again, on your way home.'

"Jist afore I war a goin' away, I went to William Henry Harrison McGee, and says to him, 'Whar's Mr. Jinkins: Air you ready?'

"'Ready for what?' says he.

"'Why, ready to go out with me and take a hand organ along. I'm a waitin' for both of you.'

"And he says, 'Uncle, please excuse us. The fact is, we've changed our minds. We are afraid the expenses of the trip will swallow up all of the profits.'

"Oh, no; I told him we can live cheap. Half a dollar a day will be enough for each of us, and as I said

this, he gin me a hard stare. ‘Why, half a dollar a day won’t pay for our julips.’

“My eyes were opened on the spot; for, if they spent money at that rate, I would be broke up in a week, and so I bid him good-by, and ain’t seen him nor any of the rest of the family since. That’s what’s become of the McGees, squire.

“Squire, thar’s one thing more about the McGees that I ought to tell you.”

“What is it, Giles?”

“Well, squire, it’s this: My sister Katy telled me about the gals going every summer down to the sea-shore to wash themselves, as if the Mississippi were not big enough to wash in, and how one young feller fell in love with little Katy, and come all the way to Memphis to see her.”

At this point Giles started from his seat; his stiff, gray hair stood up; his eyes expanded to twice their usual size.

Strong, who had heard of his violent attack a few days before, supposed he was subject to some kind of fits, and was greatly alarmed. He sprang up by the side of Giles—“What’s the matter, Giles? What’s the matter with you? Are you sick?” But, before Giles could reply, the door opened, and—“How de-do now, Mr. Giles. How is your l-e-g-s now, Mr. Giles?” came from a little, lean, narrow, weazened-face woman, the female counterpart of Jim Wilson. “Mr. Giles, you went away from our house this morning in sich a ternal hurry, that you forgot the Shaker linament to oint your legs with, and as soon as ever I found it out, I had my mule saddled and fetched it over to you. It’s a powerful thing to kill pain, Mr. Giles—especially

in the legs. . Here it is, Mr. Giles," and as she said this, she pulled from the same old, black, ragged saddle-bags that Jim Wilson had brought over on his visit to the tavern, a bottle about a foot high and four inches across, half full of a thick, white fluid; "Here it is, Mr. Giles. You must allers shake the bottle so, afore you put it on," shaking the bottle with great vigor; "and its the best thing for rheumatiz and pains in the legs in the whole world. Try some of it; only a little at first, and see how soon you'll get well."

This long speech gave Giles time to become more composed. He shook hands with the widow, and making a low bow to Mr. Strong, said: "Let me have the honor to introduce to you Mrs. Betsy Jones. She's Mr. Wilson's sister what were here a few days ago."

Mrs. Betsy Jones made a low courtesy to Mr. Strong, and said that she was mighty glad to become acquainted with any friend of Mr. Giles—even if he were a Yankee.

Mr. Strong said he was always happy to become acquainted with handsome young widows.

Mrs. Betsy Jones held the Linament bottle before her face, and said the gentleman was surely a jokin' when he told her she was handsome—"Ain't he, Mr. Giles?"

Mr. Giles said he didn't believe Mr. Strong ever said a joke in all his life. He had a better opinion of him nor that.

Mrs. Jones put the linament bottle on the table. "Do, 'ef you please, oint your legs with this linament. It's Shaker's linament, Mr. Giles, and is sartin to cure you. Your legs, Mr. Giles, is—they is indeed—precious in the sight of your friends, and you must take good keer of 'em."

"Yes, ma'm," said Tom Giles, "I've got need of 'em, and mean to keep 'em allers ready for use."

"Do, Mr. Giles, do take good keer of 'em; for, if you should lose 'em, you'll never get a better parr."

Tom smiled at this compliment, and the widow said: "I can't stay no longer, Mr. Giles. I jist rid over out of consarn for you, bein' as you is afflicted."

"Yes, ma'm," said Tom, "I's terribly afflicted."

"You ought to take keer of yourself, and more nor that, you ought to have somebody to take keer of you."

"Yes, ma'm," said Giles, "I'll take good keer of myself, you may depend on that."

"I must go," said Mrs. Jones. "'Ef I can get one of you gentlemen jist to help me on my mule, I'll be obleedged to you, cause the animal, you see, is a little skittish sometimes—in course, though I can hardly expect Mr. Strong here to wait on me, bein' as we never seed one another afore."

Giles went with Mrs. Jones to the bars, and helped her to mount a poor, old, half blind mule, that, perhaps, was a little skittish twenty years before, when it was a colt.

Mrs. Betsy Jones held his hand for some minutes, and as she rode off, said: "Do come and see us soon, Mr. Giles, and take good keer of your legs."

"I'll do that thing, you may be sarten," said Tom, as he returned to the house.

"Squire," said Giles, "you've seen now, with your own eyes, that there is more terrible things in this world nor splitting the Union, and sprinklin' salt on the 'Merican eagle's tail. A widder, inting your legs with Shaker linament, beats it all hollow. I got a

glimpse of her old, black sunbonnet as she come past the window, and I were scared, squire—that's a fact."

"Giles," said Strong, "you forgot to tell me what became of Mr. Bean, the agent for the Missionary Society."

"So I did, squire, and I have not much to say about him now, 'cause, you see, arter awhile he left us, and put on a blue coat with yellow-metal buttons, and turned out a great REFORMER. I've heard he were a ringleader among the Campbellites, but I don't know, and what Tom Giles don't know, you, who know me so well now, in course don't expect me to tell."

"Of course not," said Strong.

CHAPTER XXII.

A FEW months after the death of Father Blowhard, as Mr. Brandon was riding one day not far from his house, he heard some person on horseback rapidly following him. He looked behind him and saw a man with a long, thin, sunburnt face, who was dressed in a full suit of rusty black, and covered with an old, brown cloak, galloping after him. Brandon slackened his pace to enable the stranger to overtake him, but when he got within a few yards of him, the stranger checked his horse also, and rode slowly behind Brandon.

The man immediately began to sing in a voice so loud, that he could be heard at the distance of half a mile:

"I tell you whar I feel the best,
Among the shouting Methodest;
I tell you whar I feel the best,
Among the shouting Methodest."

As soon as he began, Brandon whipped his horse and started on a gallop to get out of his way. The stranger followed at the same pace, and soon overtook him.

Brandon bowed to him—"A pleasant day, sir."

"Yes," said the stranger, with a sigh, "all days—all times are pleasant to him who has perfect peace with God, whose sins are forgiven, and whose iniquities are covered, and whose heart is always filled with the glad sunshine of perfect love. My peace flows as a river—even as Jordan when his banks are full. I hope,

stranger, that you are enjoying the blessing of perfect love."

"Thank you, sir," said Brandon. "I do not, however, enjoy the blissful peace you speak of."

"Lose no time, then, stranger, in seeking after that pearl of great price. It will be useful to you when earthly riches take to themselves wings and fly away. It will endure forever and ever."

"I thank you, sir, for the kind interest you take in my welfare," said Brandon, "and shall endeavor to profit by your exhortation."

They rode on together for a few minutes in silence, and Brandon had a better opportunity to look at the stranger than he had before: although he was riding a large horse, his legs were so long, that they nearly reached the ground. He was dressed in the costume of a Methodist preacher. His chest and shoulders were narrow—he raised his hat—his thick, black hair was combed down over his forehead, and his ears and hands were very long and thin.

At length the stranger turned his face toward Brandon, and said: "My name is Jabez Clitters. I once was one of the preachers in charge on this circuit, but I have located now and live near this place. It seems to me, brother, I have seen your face before, but I can't call your name—perhaps it was at camp-meeting last month.

"It may be that you have seen me before; but if you have, I do not remember it. I am very sure, however, that you never saw me at a camp-meeting, for I never was at such a place in my life."

"You are not a Methodist, then, brother?"

"No, sir."

“A Presbyterian?”

“No, sir.”

“Ah, a Baptist, I see?”

“No, no; I am an Episcopalian.”

“Ah,” said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, “very good. This country is filling up very fast. Hundreds of families have come into it within the last five or six years. The fine lands in this neighborhood have induced a great many persons to move out here. But I did not know that any person of your denomination had come yet.”

“We have two or three families of our church in this neighborhood,” replied Brandon.

“Whar did you come from,” said the Reverend Jabez Clitters.

“I came from Caroline county, Virginia.”

“What might your name be, stranger?”

“My name is Hugh Smith Brandon.”

“Well, sir,” said Jabez, giving his hand to Brandon, “you’re welcome to this settlement. I’m glad to make your acquaintance, sir.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Brandon, taking Clitters by the hand. “It is very pleasant to be cordially received by my new neighbors.”

“Much of a family?” said Jabez.

“No, sir; only a daughter and a grand-daughter, with me and a few servants.”

“Daughter married, sir? Whar do you live, stranger?”

“I bought my plantation of Mr. Edwards.”

“Ah, Edwards has sold out at last. Well, he’s been trying to do so for two years, and it’s a wonder that I have not heard of it before. Well, sir, you have got

a very nice little place, good land, lately cleared, and plenty of good water, the building is not much though, only a cabin, with four rooms and a kitchen, and some out houses for the servants."

"They suit me very well, sir," said Brandon, dryly

"Well, they may," said Jabez. "Who wouldn't be suited with a house and four rooms? Does any man want a thousand rooms to live in, in this sublunary world? Well, Mr. Brandon, you've got a nice little place; you join Mr. Rashleigh on one side, and Mr. Norton on the other. I live only about two miles from you, but on the other side of Rashleighs. I'm one of the first settlers in these parts, and you're welcome to our settlement, Mr. Brandon."

"Thank you, sir."

"Mr. Brandon, that's a pretty good hoss you're riding. How will you swop it?"

"Exchange horses, sir? I do not wish to do so. This is my family riding horse," said Brandon, with a look of surprise at the Reverend Jabez Clitters.

They rode on in silence for awhile, which the Reverend Jabez broke by saying—"Mr. Brandon, I have got some very good books in my saddle bags which I want to sell. Will you look at them?"

"What books are they, sir?"

"I have the lives of Freeborn Garrison and Mrs. Fletcher."

"I never heard of these people before, and take no interest in their biographies. Have you nothing else?"

"Yes, sir; I have *Sherlock on Providence*."

"Ah, that is an old and good book. I read it at college. What is the price of it?" Jabez named the

price, and the small sum was paid. Brandon seized the book eagerly, kissed it, and said: "It is a great treasure. I am glad, sir, that you overtook me. The book is a prize I little expected to find in this half wilderness."

"Good-by, neighbor," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, giving Brandon his hand. "I must turn out here at this tree. I hope to meet you often."

"Good-by, sir."

There was a sadness on the countenance of Brandon, which had not escaped the keen stare of Clitters, but Brandon was so dignified in his carriage, that he did not venture to inquire its cause.

Mr. Brandon rode slowly on—his white hair lifted by the wind, until he reached his home.

"Have you a letter, father? You have been to the post office, I believe. Now, it really is so strange that we are so soon neglected by those who ought to cherish our memories, and it is sadly inconvenient to be at this time without the promised remittance."

"No; but the mails in this new country, Martha, are very irregular; let us hope that in a few days the promised aid will come."

"I hope so, father. In the meantime we will get along as we can. That last letter has made me nervous and almost sick. I fear, from the statements in the letter, that he does know where we have moved to, and will follow and annoy us."

"Let us hope for the best, Martha. Your fears may be groundless."

"I have suffered so much from him, father, and you have also, that I do hope our friends will be discreet enough to conceal the place of our new home; if

he shall follow us, I fear that as we are now removed from those who have known and sympathized with us, our situation here will be worse than it was in Virginia."

"Do not fear, daughter. The troubles that never come, always seems greater than those we actually endure."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE Reverend Theophilus Blowhard died unmarried, and without any relations for whom he cared to provide, and by his last will he left all his property to his well-beloved and faithful friend, Jabez Clitters, to be sold, and the proceeds, after payment of his debts and expenses of administration, to be applied to sundry benevolent purposes, especially to aid in building a new meeting-house, and for the Missionary Society.

Jabez took it to a lawyer and learned that Minna's child was included in the provisions of the will, and as a faithful executor, he immediately went to work to recover possession of the property. His first care was to find McGee, and, if possible, to obtain a repayment of the hundred dollars, and a reconveyance of the ten acres of land; but he learned McGee had moved very soon after Blowhard's death to the town on the Mississippi where the ten acres of land was situated. Nothing was left, therefore, but to discharge, as he said, with a sigh, his duty as an executor to his deceased friend, and to capture the child without delay.

"I feel a deep sense of duty, brethren," he said, to his friends, "in this matter—duty, as executor of that holy man who has gone before us over the dark rolling waters of Jordan's turbid stream, which separates that happy land from ours, and of duty as a patriot and a Christian, because, you see, brethren, slavery is essential to the happiness and well being, and prosperity of

the state, nation, and people, and because it is a Bible institution. Abraham was a slave-holder, and had men servants, and women servants, and asses, and camels, and silver, and gold. Isaac was a slave-holder, and had men servants, and maid servants, and asses, and camels, and silver, and gold. Jacob was a slave-holder, and had men servants, and maid servants, and asses, and camels, and silver, and gold. Slave-holding is right. By means of it the treasuries of our societies are replenished, and filled up with gold, and silver, and bank-notes. "Brethren," said he, with a groan, "I don't intend to rust out, but to warr out, and however great, and severe, and arduous, and difficult the work and labor, and care, and toil may be, I feel in duty bound, in conscience bound, in honor bound as an executor, and as a patriot, and as a Christian, and as a philanthropist, and as a man, to catch that little negro.

His friends, who stood weeping around him, now looked up and smiled; two or three of the men said, "Amen." Some others, however, of the members of the church, stood aloof, and said they would take no part in the matter, one way or the other. He might catch it if he could, but without their aid.

Another hunt was determined upon, and a day appointed for the purpose. Men were sent out to invite the neighbors to take part in the hunt, and it was found on this occasion, as it had been before, that those who drank the most whisky, were the best patriots.

Norton was a candidate for the legislature; of course he was foremost in the cause, and almost as zealous as the Reverend Jabez Clitters himself in supporting the system of slave-holding. His arguments were different

from those of the reverend gentleman, although they both came to the same result. All who were opposed to slavery, were fools and mad men, and in favor of dissolving the Union, of ruining the masters, and burning their houses over their heads, and destroying their wives and children, and, therefore, ought to be burnt or hung.

Norton was leader of the party, and directed the whole company to the mountains. They made an early start and reached them before sunrise. The party was not large, and their proceedings had been conducted with great secrecy. A loud shout was heard, and a tin horn was blown, which was answered by a dozen more, and the party collected at the mouth of the cave. Very soon Bill Harris came out, leading blind Minna and holding in his arms the little half clad child. A loud shout made the mountains echo around them, and the Reverend Jabez Clitters crossed his hands over his breast, and raised his eyes so high, that only the white of them could be seen.

Old Minna, too, crossed her hands upon her breast, and stood in silence. She raised her white eyeballs to heaven, and the big tears followed each other rapidly down her scarred cheeks.

They gathered around her: "Oh, men!" she said, "for de Lord's sake—for marcy's sake, don't take from me all the child I'se got. I'se had five children, and one arter another has been sold, and now de good Lord, for to comfort me, has gin me one more; dis little one; don't tar it from me—it will kill me. My heart is a'most broke already. It's mighty hard, men, for a mother to have her own child tuk away from her."

"It's none of your child," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters. "You have neither bought it, nor paid for it. You have given neither silver, nor gold, nor bank-notes, nor he asses, nor she asses, nor horses, nor camels for it. It is my property, to be applied for the propagation and extension of the gospel in foreign parts and nations, and to build a new meeting-house. It has been left, and devised, and bequeathed to me by the last, and only will and testament of Father Blowhard, now deceased, and dead, and buried, and gone to glory, and to heaven, of which will and testament I am the executor, and in duty bound as such, and as a patriot, and as a Christian, and as a philanthropist and a man, to carry it into full and complete effect and operation. How dare you have the impudence and audacity, and fool-hardiness, and wickedness, and depravity to assert, and state, and declare that this nigger is your child? You're a thief, and rob, and steal, from the church of God."

"Master, I did not mean no harm to the church in what I's said. The Lord gin me the child, and I thought it was mine."

"You thought, eh. Who gave you—you a negro woman—the right to think, or opine, or conjecture, or deliberate, or have opinions? Your impudence and audacity exceeds all limits and bounds. You are, I repeat, trying to rob and steal from, and embezzle the property of the Missionary Society for the propagation and extension, and diffusion of the light, and blessings, and benefits, and privileges of the glorious and blessed gospel of free grace in foreign lands, and nations, and people, and the property of the church."

"Master, do forgive me. I did not mean no harm to the gospel."

"Ask God to forgive you, woman, and don't ask such a thing or request from a poor, weak, sinful mortal, and fallable man, and feeble worm of the dust as I am."

Poor old Minna was sad. She groped her way to a tree, and leaned against it.

"You, and your husband and consort, and partner in crime," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, "have not only broken and set at naught, and violated the law of God, in stealing and running away with, and carrying off the property of the Missionary Society, for the extension and spread of the glorious and blessed gospel of free grace in foreign parts, and among strange people who have never heard its glorious sound, and felt its blessed, and benign, and healthful, and soul-reviving influences and effects, but you have broken and violated, and trampled on the laws of the State of Tennessee, which enact and forbid the harboring, aiding, abetting, or supporting of a runaway, fugitive slave, and you must go to the penitentiary for so doing, and doing so. It's my bounden duty, as executor, and as a Christian, and a patriot, and a man, now to have you seized, and taken, and captured, so that you may be examined, and tried, and convicted, and sentenced, and punished as an example, and terror to all others, in like cases, and in like manner found offending, and doing as you have done."

Minna put her apron over her eyes, and leaned heavily against the tree.

A man came up to the Reverend Jabez Clitters, touched his elbow, and led him aside. "Have you not

done enough, my friend? You have the child. Why should you trouble the woman any further, she is old and blind; it will not do any good to send her to the penitentiary."

"Brother," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, "it's a case of conscience, and honor, and patriotism, and good demeanor toward the State. The offense of which this woman is guilty, is a deep, and a grevious, and a horrible sin. She has stolen church property, which is a sacrilege, you know, and deprived the church of it for months, when the money for which the child might have been sold, is so greatly wanted and needed to propagate and extend the blessed and glorious gospel in foreign parts, and among heathen nations, and foreign people, and to build a new meeting-house. I would if I could, and dare forgive the erring, and sinful, and wicked creature; but it is a case of conscience, and honor, and duty, brother," here he sighed, "and I must go on with it and proceed."

"Very well, sir. But do you know that you have no right to apply the money in your hands to carry on the prosecution? You can proceed, if you choose, but you must do so at your own cost."

The Reverend Jabez Clitters put his hand to his forehead, and deliberated, and thought, and studied for one minute, and then said: "Brother, I thank you for the information, and advice, and council you have given me. Woman," he said, approaching Minna, "I forgive you, and remit the offense of which you have been guilty against the dignity, and power, and peace, and honor of the State of Tennessee, and I hope and expect that this act of mercy and forgiveness on my part, will have its due and proper effect on your heart, and

character, and life, and conduct. A man of the world would not have done so ; but I am a Christian, and must be merciful and forgiving even as I hope for mercy and forgiveness.

“ Thankee, master,” said Minna, courtysing to him. “ Aint you gwine to gin me my child back ? ”

“ Why, you wicked, and ungrateful, and obstinate, and hard-hearted old creature. In the very act and moment that you receive forgiveness, you want me to help you rob the church and Missionary Society, for the propagation and extension of the gospel among heathen nations in foreign parts, and among strange people, of its goods and chattles, rights, credits, and property, and effects. Oh, brothers,” he said, looking around him, “ see the shocking depravity of the human soul and heart, and how prone it is to evil—’specially in niggers.”

“ Master,” said Minna, “ that child is mine. God gave it to me. If your church takes it, your church is a thief and robber. God is not so far off as some people think. He is looking right down on you, and sees my child in your hand as he does a sparrow when it falls to the ground. If you take my child away, you will ruin it, and kill me. Murder and robbery is no light things in God’s sight.”

“ Knock her down,” said one of the men ; “ stop her impudence.”

“ Kill me, if you chose—kill me. I had rather die than live. I beg you to kill me at once, and put me out of my misery. It would be merciful in you to do so, but I will talk while I’ve life and breath. I tell you now that I’ll take this whole thing and lay it afore the Lord, and tell him all you have said and done, and I’ll leave the whole matter in his hands.”

"Woman," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, "it's my blessed lot, and privilege, and duty, to be a preacher of the gospel, and on next Sabbath, providence permitting, I intend and expect to preach in the Pisgah meeting-house on the sin and iniquity of covetousness, and if you and your husband will come there, you may sit on one of the back benches, and hear me, and be enlightened on that subject on which, at this present time, you are in gross and heathenish darkness. Come, woman, and bring your erring and sinful husband with you. It may be a permanent and everlasting blessing to both of you, and, in the meantime, I will pray and entreat the Lord that you may be forgiven your great and heathenish sin, and iniquity, and transgression. You see now what a great and glorious thing it is to be a Christian. A worldly minded man would not be so merciful to you. But I forgive you and even pray for you. Go thy way, woman, and sin no more."

The men started with the child. Minna, guided by the noise of their footsteps, and the cries of the child, followed them, shrieking aloud, groping and stumbling in her blindness, until she could no longer hear them, and then fell into a deep ravine.

"This is a fine, hearty child," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, who had it in his arms. "Worth at least four hundred dollars in cash. Father Blowhard was a real and sincere benefactor to the church. He has proved his zeal in the cause by his good works, and charity, and beneficence, which are remembered, and will be had in memory long after his decease and death."

"Don't you think," said Stebbins, the lame tailor who was limping by his side, "that it is a kind of hard to take that ar child from its own mother?"

“My dear Brother Stebbins, the thought you have just uttered is a suggestion of Satan, and the devil, and of the evil one. Tell him, and command him to get behind you and to retire, and go away from you. And, like a fiend and enemy of mankind, and of the human race, as he is, he has struck at, and assailed, and hit the very point, marrow, and gist of the whole question and controversy between the friends and patrons, and supporters of our beloved and time-honored, and Christian institution of slavery, and the foes and enemies of that institution; because if the mother and father have a better right and title to, and interest in and for the child, than the master and owner on the day and hour it is born, that better right, and title, and interest will continue, and remain, and exist, till the child grows up to be a man, and of full age. If we do not own and possess them when they are infants and babies, we can not do so when they become youths and adults, and men, and women, and in their old age.”

“I see it now,” said Stebbins; “if you have no right to the babies, you have none when they grow up to be men and women.”

“Exactly and precisely so, Brother Stebbins. I am glad and rejoiced that I have been able in so few words to explain and unravel the whole matter and thing to you, so that you do clearly and fully comprehend, and understand, and know it.”

“But she said, sir, that God gave her the child.”

“The laws and constitution of the State of Tennessee, and the customs of the country, and the Constitution of the United States, and the laws of the United States, give this child to its master and owner, and that master and owner, therefore, and for that reason, has

the right and title to it, and to have and to hold the use and the possession, and the benefit thereof, and of it."

"I see it now," said Stebbins. "Laws of God give it to its father and mother, and the laws of men give it to the master."

"Precisely and exactly so, Brother Stebbins. In this world we are governed and controlled by the laws of man. In the next world we must and will obey, and be governed by the laws of God."

"Yes; that's it. If you'll preach that doctrine, you will have a great many hearers."

"I have no time, Brother Stebbins, to turn aside to preach that doctrine. My hands are now full with a controversy and question, I have just now and at this time, with the Universalists, and when I shall have routed, and beaten, and driven them from the field, perhaps I may turn my attention, and give my time to other and less important matters."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE child, which, at first, after a slight struggle, seemed quietly to yield itself to the embrace of Clitters, now began, when it could no longer see its mother, to cry and scream with its utmost power. All the men had left Jabez and Stebbins, and gone home with Norton, whose promises to reward their labor for the state with whiskey, were more acceptable than those of Jabez to pay in preaching. They were out of hearing and out of sight. The struggles of the child, and its screams increased, and became more furious. Jabez, at first, tried to sooth it; he tried even to flatter it, by telling him he was a pretty boy, but little Isham was neither to be soothed nor flattered. He kicked and screamed so much, that the feeble Jabez could scarcely retain him in his arms. Jabez then pinched him, but each pinch only called out a louder scream and more vehement struggles. He then called him a brat, and shook him till he was half breathless; but, the little fellow soon recovered, and seized Jabez by the top of his right ear. Jabez withdrew the support of his arms from the child, and it hung to his ear, supported only by its teeth, for a minute, and then fell, but carried in its fall a piece of the ear, about the size and shape of a dime. Jabez clapped his hand to the wound, and uttered some words which, if we were now to tell what they were, would be to anticipate our story. In an instant, a woman, dressed in black, riding on a small and beau-

tiful black pony, came up, at full speed, and belabored the head and shoulders of Jabez with her riding whip. She was followed by four Indians, running on foot, who uttered loud yells as they approached. Jabez gave one look at them and fled.

The shouts of the men, when they captured the child, and the sound of their tin horns, advised some of the Indians who happened to be near the place, that a tumult of some kind had occurred. They ran as fast as they could toward the place, and saw the capture, and made prompt pursuit. Isham, who was out of the cave at the time, soon came back, and in less than half an hour after it was captured, the child was returned to its parents.

They immediately removed to another and a better hiding place in a deeper recess of the mountains, and were, for the present, safe; and were guarded by their now vigilant sentinels—the Indians.

It would be as vain to attempt to describe the joy of the parents upon the recovery of the child, as it would be to paint their sorrow at its loss.

There are feelings which neither the pen nor pencil can paint. Sorrows so deep and joys so thrilling, that those only who have felt them can know them, and man has yet no words to utter them in speech.

They were happy—their child was safe. They had friends toward whom their hearts swelled with unutterable gratitude.

The Reverend Jabez Clitters was sad. His efforts to recapture the child had been defeated. The church was suffering for money—the heathen were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death; and the money to dispel part of that darkness had been wrested from his

hands. And then his ear—his right ear, with a little round hole in the top of it, about as big as a ten cent piece, was sore, and smarted severely. It bled but a drop or two, for that part of him was as thin as paper. He wiped the blood from it with his handkerchief, and after the fright and the danger of further pursuit was over; he walked slowly and sadly toward his home. "Such," he said, "is the lot of Christians in this wicked world. We can make no effort to do good but Satan tries to thwart us. Evil prospers, because this world is its natural place—good decays here because it is a plant that prospers only in a brighter and better clime."

When he reached his home, his friends gathered round him to console him for his loss. But he refused to be comforted. "He could have borne," he said, "the loss of his ear, but to lose the child was too much—too much for mortal, sinful man to endure, unless, indeed, he had a source of comfort that the world knew not of."

A doctor was sent for—the only one in the settlement, except Isham, (whose services were not needed on this occasion,) and he came. He was a young man who had just graduated, and come to the neighborhood to commence the practice of his profession. He consulted with Jabez, and with his friends. No expedient could be suggested to fill up the hole in the top of his ear. But he modestly suggested that as his patients' ears were unusually thin and long, the better way would be to cut off the top of the ear. The suggestion was hailed by Jabez and his friends with rapture. It would remove the ugly hole which Jabez said some people who did not know him might see, and his enemies would

say it had been made as a mark upon him for sheep stealing. "But," said Jabez, "when you do that, one ear will be longer than the other, and the same scandal may be raised against me."

"Never fear," said the doctor, "I can remedy that. I will clip them both off to the same size, and I do assure you they are so long now, that when they are clipped they will look all the better for it."

The young doctor had no surgical instruments. None could be had nearer than Nashville, and with a promptness and an ingenuity that does credit to his profession, he called for a large pair of shears, which were brought to him by a girl, and while some men held Jabez, he trimmed first the bitten ear, and then he reduced the other to the same size. He worked as leisurely as a barber cutting hair—now clipping at one place, and now at an other, then standing before the patient, and consulting his friends whether both ears were of the same size, and then nicked off another little piece, and now a rough edge, and now a corner, till the task was done. All agreed that his ears looked better than they did before. When the plasters were applied and all was done, Jabez looked up with a sad smile, and said: "Some calamities are blessings in disguise. Oh, the weakness of erring mortals—the afflictions of the saints are blessings indeed."

The next morning when little Isham got out of his bed, and was dressed by his mother in his father's old coat, which was covered with patches of various colors, and hung down so far below his feet, that it trailed behind him on the ground; he presented a spectacle that alarmed his father, and which, but for his great suffering, would have amused any other person.

Although Mr. Strong can not but in candor admit, that he feels some partiality for the persons whose names appear in this narrative, yet, he can not and will not allow that feeling so far to control him, as that he, in any degree, will exaggerate the beauty of any one of them; and, it must be confessed, that little Isham never was a beauty. His legs were always very crooked—his nose was flat, and his lips very large. And on the morning after he was rescued, his head and lips were swollen so enormously, that he resembled an ape rather than a human being.

“What on airth is the matter wid de child,” said old Isham, as Minna brought it out from its bed toward him. “What on airth ails him?”

“Don’t know,” said Minna. “May be he got bruised in the scrape yesterday.”

Isham opened his arms and his little son toddled to him. He then examined his face, and mouth and nose.

“This is the most worst case of swellin’ I’se ever seen in all my practice. Why, Minna, woman, jist come here and feel de child’s nose; it’s most as big as a goose egg, and the lips is more than two inches thick, and stick out half as long as your hand. I never see sich a case afore in all my practice, and thar’s not a bruise on his head.”

Minna passed her hand slowly down her child’s face. “Dear me,” she said, “I’d hardly know dis was my child. Do something for him quick, or he’ll die.”

Isham examined and re-examined the child’s face, then looked at his hands and feet, and felt his pulse. “This is the oddest case I’se ever met with in the course of a twenty year practice of medicine. I always could tell what ailed a patient as soon as I seen him;

but this case beats me out. I 'se afeared it 's 'bove the reach of my skill, in my 'pinion."

During the day the old man washed little Isham's mouth and nose with decoctions of roots and herbs, and applied a poultice of slippery elm bark to them, but all his applications seemed to be of no service. The swelling increased, and the features of the poor, suffering child were more frightfully distorted than before.

At night one of the four Indians that rescued the child, came to the hut of old Isham and Minna. He brought with him a little, leathery looking substance, very thin and quite round, about as big as a dime, which he said he took from the child's mouth soon after he got him from Clitters. Old Isham seized it, and turned it over and over, and examined it by the light of the fire.

"This," he said, "looks like a piece of eel skin more than anything else; but how in the world the child's got it in his mouth, I can't tell, unless that preacher put it thar to stop his crying."

Very soon afterward another Indian came, who had been down in the white settlement that day, and had there heard that the child had bitten out a piece of the preacher's ear. As soon as he had made his statement, old Isham dropped his head between his hands, and uttered a deep groan. He then raised it, and looked sadly at his child—his voice trembled and his hands shook. He was afraid to speak. Minna stood by the bench on which he was sitting.

"For de Lord's sake, Ish, do tell me what you think now 'bout the chile. I know something dreadful is the matter, 'cause I can hear you trying to smother your groans."

"It's no use to keep it secret—dat chile will die. It can't be saved."

"Oh, don't say so, Isham. It ken be cured. You must cure the baby."

"It's no use trying. Anybody can cure a rattle-snake's bite, but its mighty few doctors as can cure a man as has bit a rattlesnake. I had one case of that kind, and it tuk me a month to do it, and then I come nigh losing my patient. But to bite a preacher when he's hot in chasing a nigger, is sartain death—'specially if blood's drawn. All the books on pizens lays down that particular case as one that no man can cure."

"Giles," said Mr. Strong, "I see plainly enough that if any body shall be so incredulous as to deny any part of this book, this very chapter is the one that will be assailed with the greatest bitterness. Are you sure that the statements are all right?"

"I'm mighty sorry, squire, that I can't tell you, 'cause, you see, I allers believed and yet think, that both them shots made by McGee's rifle at the shootin' match were mere chance ones. His rifle barl allers appeared crooked to me; but be that as it may, when they axed me to take part in hunting the little nigger, I would have no hand in it, partly, because I would not have any thing to do with the prize that he won with that thar rifle, and partly because I had a kind of liken for old Isham, and did not care to disturb him. He doctored in my family a long time, and were as good a doctor as the best of 'em. But this I do know, squire; Jabez Clitters lived right close by my house arter he located. He swapped horses, sold books and preached. I heard him preach once and only once, squire. He

could preach, I must confess it, squire—he could preach as long as a Baptist preacher, but the sarmon that I heard were all works—works—works—all shallow water, running over a black, muddy bottom, and of not much account. I did hear of the child's bitin' his ear. It were norated about the settlement for a little while, and then hushed up; and I looked particularly at him while he were preachin'. He had long, black harr, which 'peared to have been greased, and were combed down over his ears so as to hide 'em. I were a deacon in the Baptist church, and he were a Methodist preacher, and it would n't look right for me to be asking questions about it."

"That was very proper, Mr. Giles," said Strong, "and does great credit to your discretion."

"Squire, if you had only thought of it when Betsy Jones were here, you might have known the hull truth."

"Why so, Giles?"

"Why, she's his half sister, and lived with him at that very time. She were a little gal then, but not too young to remember a thing like that."

CHAPTER XXV.

ABOUT four o'clock in the afternoon of that day, Giles looked out of the window: "As sure as I'm a livin' man, thar's Betsy Jones. She is now gettin' off her old mule at the horse-block."

The lady hitched her mule to a stake at the fence, took off the old, black, saddle-bags, and in a minute a rap was heard at the door. She came in: "Gentlemen, I thought you'd like to have some nice apples," she said, as she emptied about a peck from the saddle-bags. "I've brought these over for you. These here red ones is very fine, and these yaller ones is fall pippins. Do help yourselves. You're mighty welcome to 'em. Take this one, Mr. Giles; it's the finest in the lot, and I've laid it by on purpose for you. It's so nice and mellow." And she handed the apple with a bewitching smile—a widow's smile.

"Thank you," said Giles, as he took a large, yellow apple from her hand.

Mr. Strong said: "I am glad you have come over just at this time, because we are now passing over a part of my book, of which Mr. Giles informs me you have some knowledge; relating to the Reverend Jabez Clitters, and a misfortune that happened to him at the time he captured the child of blind Minna."

"Mr.—Mr.—Mr.—Yankee, I forgot your name."

"Mr. Strong," said Giles.

"Mr. Strong, I'm glad you are a going to put that

down in your book. Brother Jabez always said that the public would know the truth of the thing. When he lived here he was determined to preach again' the soul-destroying sin of looking at monkeys, and tigers, and lions, and such outlandish beasts He always said if the Lord wanted American people to see such beasts, he could have made as many of them as he 'd a mind to, and turned 'em loose in our woods, so as every body could see 'em, and rebuked the people that went to see them, sharply, I tell you. Well, that made some of the people mad, and Bill McClintick raised a report that brother Jabez was cropped for stealing a calf, and said it was done at the court house door in Guilford County, in North Carolina, and that he stood by and saw the sheriff do it. Now, Mr. Strong, that were a ternal lie, as I know of my own personal knowledge. Because, you see, I lived with him, and combed his harr sometimes when I was a little girl, and his ears were as long as the best man's in the settlement, till he catch that little beast of a nigger; and when he come home arter that, I saw two drops of blood on his cheek, and got a towel to wipe it off. And when the doctor came—Dr. John Shelly it was—he were a mighty smart man, only he drank himself to death—when Dr. Shelly called for the shears, I went to the back room and brought them to him my own self, and then, as I could not bear to see the thing done, I went out and sat by the kitchen fire, and covered my face with a check apron, till sister Martha Clitters—that 's brother Jabez's wife—come and told me it were all over, and how much it improved brother Jabez's looks. Then I went in, and saw him sitting in the chair, with his legs stretched out before him, and his brown cloak thrown

over them, and a white sticking plaster on the top of both his ears. That story about his stealing a calf and bein' cropped for it, is all a lie, raised by his inemis to distroy his influence. He was one of the best men in this world."

"Is he yet living?" said Strong.

"No, sir; he's been dead ten years."

"Thank you, Mrs. Jones. I will put your statements in my book just as you have made them. Can you give me any further information about this matter?"

"Not much that I know of; but when brother Jabez died he left a great parcel of papers. They are at brother Wilson's, and are headed up in an old nail keg. If Mr. Giles will come over he's mighty welcome to bring 'em to you."

Giles thanked the lady, and said he were good for nothing at totin now, bein' as he had an old crick in his back, that he got thirty odd years ago a totin a looking-glass.

"Do rub some Shaker linament on it," said Mrs. Betsy Jones, "and it will cure you right away."

The next morning Mr. Strong saw Mrs. Betsy Jones riding slowly toward the tavern, leaning over a keg (which laid on the mule's neck before her,) with a long, peach tree switch in her hand. She was humming a hymn tune very slowly, and with great sadness. He met her at the horse-block, took the keg, and then helped her to dismount.

"I allers feel so sad and melancholy-like whenever I tech any thing that belonged to brother Jabez. He was so good that I feel pious-like if I only tech an old coat of his'n, and bringin' over this keg full of his papers, has made me so pious that I feel as if I could cry my

eyes out, and could hardly smile even if I saw Mr. Giles and heard that he 's got well."

The keg was carried into the room ; Giles unheaded it, and Mr. Strong poured out its contents on the table. It was filled with old letters and other papers. Near the bottom of the keg there was a small parcel, carefully tied up in an old newspaper. The newspaper was taken off, and under it there was a wrapping of brown paper—that was removed, and then another wrapping of white paper—now discolored by dust and time—was disclosed, sealed with great care. Mrs. Betsy Jones broke the seals, and an old snuff box, with a red and yellow star on the lid, fell on the table.

She opened it, and five or six little pieces of thin, tough, black skin were all that it contained. Upon careful examination by the whole party, it was plain that these were the pieces that Dr. Shelly had cut from the ears of Jabez Clitters. They answered the description exactly, and after being steeped for half an hour in a tumbler of water, they resumed their natural appearance. There was the identical hole, as big as a ten cent piece, in the top of one of them ; there were the chips and clippings from both ears.

"This settles it," said Mr. Strong.

"Settles what, squire," said Giles.

"Why, that the Reverend Jabez Clitters was not cropped for calf stealing at Guilford Court House, as Bill McClintick reported. If he had been, the sheriff would never have let him have the pieces, and he would not have wanted them, and still less would he have brought them with him, and kept them so carefully as he did.

"I am very glad," said Mr. Strong to Mrs. Betsy

Jones, "that the reputation of your brother is at last relieved from the stain that the malice of his enemies cast upon it. He died under a cloud which is now dispelled. No, Madam; it is now certain that your brother—the Reverend Jabez Clitters—did not steal—Oh! no he did not steal——A CALF."

"Oh, I feel like shoutin'," said Mrs. Betsy Jones, as she put her handkerchief up to her eyes. "How do you feel about it, Mr. Giles?"

"Why, ma'm," said Giles, "I never believed a word of it. Jabez Clitters would no more have stole a calf, than he would have robbed old Minna of her apron or her bonnet at the time he tuk the child from her. Indeed he wouldn't, squire."

Mrs. Betsy Jones clapped her hands, uttered a loud scream, and threw her arms up as if she intended to put them around Tom Giles' neck. He speedily ran to the other side of the table.

"Oh, Mr. Giles," said Mrs. Betsy Jones, "only to think that for ten years brother Jabez was bore down by scandal, and some of his brothers in the church even let on that it might be true, and now—now—to-day, its all cleared up, and the cloud, as Mr. Strong says, is expelled. Brother Jabez always said: "The memory of the just shall be blessed."

—was to a certain way to maintain our said "son" —
asimone said to others oft that mine said most boisterous
—and when at said house a rabid boisterous —
—now, said, mistres — said in the house —
—Isaiah don't be —

CHAPTER XXVI.

MR. STRONG looked eagerly over the vast heap of letters and other old papers for something that would aid him in stating the facts connected with the present narrative, but he found very little indeed that related to it. The other papers were, some of them, memoranda kept in loose notes of the difference in price between the value of horses exchanged, in each of which it seemed that the Reverend Jabez had taken good care to make from five to twenty dollars. No paper was found in which he paid any thing for the difference in value between the horses exchanged.

One package—an old and very dusty one, indeed, was found—which related in part to the matter now before the reader. They were greatly obliterated by age and the accumulated dust upon them; but enough could be made out from the fragments to show that Stebbins, the lame tailor, who was with the Reverend Jabez Clitters when the child was captured, very soon after his return to the village in which he lived, started a story, out of which grew two church trials. One in which the Reverend Jabez Clitters was charged with immoral conduct, to-wit: Profanity, and the other, in which Stebbins was charged with defaming the character of the Reverend Jabez Clitters.

It would seem, so far as it could be made out from the fragments of the dusty old papers, that immediately after Stebbins went back to the village, an excited

crowd gathered around him to listen to his thrilling narrative of the adventures of the day, and that he stated with appropriate and rather violent gestures, that "when the little nigger seized the Reverend Jabez Clitters' ear in his teeth, the Reverend Jabez made one of the awfullest ugly faces that he (Stebbins) had ever seen in all his life; so ugly, that it frightened him, and he started to run even before he heard the yells of the pursuing Indians, and that the Reverend Jabez Clitters put his right hand up to his ear, and when he found the hole bitten in it, he said: [Oh! the painful duty of the historian, that he can not sometimes skip a word which he blushes to write, and would gladly omit, if he could do so, because he knows that some of his readers will be shocked when they read it,] but the Reverend Jabez Clitters,—while every feature of his face, his chin, and lips, and nose, and cheeks, and eyes were distorted and wreathing with the utmost mental anguish, said: "d——n the little nigger."

At first his hearers supposed he was jesting, and some of them—the irreverent ones—even laughed when they heard the statement; but Stebbins repeated it the next day, and continued to do so until some people believed it. And then, too, Stebbins himself was a member of the church; he had joined it at camp meeting a few weeks before the occurrence.

Some brethren visited the Reverend Jabez, and laid the whole matter before him. He said that his heart was so full of grief at the loss of the child—so torn with anguish on account of the sufferings of Zion, in being defrauded, aye robbed, aye cheated out of four hundred dollars worth of property, goods and chattels, rights, credits and effects, that his own personal and

private grief and affliction appeared to him to be but dust and ashes, and dross and cinders in the scale and balance in which he poised and weighed it.

The brethren, he said, knew him: he had been their preacher in charge on that circuit for four years; he had lived nine years in that settlement, and, as he said so, he uncoiled his legs to their full length before him, and threw his brown cloak over them and sighed, and throwing up both his hands, exclaimed, with a sigh—“Oh, brethren, what a sin it is to rob and steal from Zion!”

The brethren retired, and filed the charges alluded to against Stebbins.

The trial came on. The interest was intense. Other denominations, especially the Calvinists, partook of the excitement. More was involved in the charges than was apparent at the first sight. The doctrine of sanctification was one that had been long and earnestly canvassed in the settlement. One party contended that man never could live without sin; that it was as essential to his existence as air. The other party contended that man could get along very well without it.

“Show me,” said the Calvinist, “a man who lives even one day without sinning.”

The Methodist replied, “There’s our beloved brother, Jabez Clitters—look at him.”

The Calvinist looked and was silent.

Stebbins was not a little troubled to make good his charges. The child was too young to testify, and could not be found. The lady dressed in black—no one knew her.

He stood alone, with a fearful weight of prejudice against him. He thought of the four Indians who

rushed to the rescue; and found them. At first they refused to commit themselves, by stating the hand they had in the matter; but, upon a guarantee that they should not be troubled, each came forward, and through an interpreter at the camp, gave his written statement that he heard the very words from the mouth of the Reverend Jabez, that Stebbins charged him with uttering.

Stebbins' eyes brightened, as he heard them testify through the interpreter, and saw the confidence with which they made their statement. But a friend of the Reverend Jabez was there to cross examine them.

"Do you know one word of English," said the interpreter. "If so, what word?"

Each shook his head—"No English. Not one word."

It further appeared that they must have been half a mile off when the biting occurred.

Stebbins was in despair.

An old Indian, who knew a little English, took pity on him, and offered to swear to anything that would help him out of the scrape.

But it seemed, on further inquiry, that he was fifty miles off when the thing happened.

Another Indian, who knew Clitters and hated him, came forward, and begged for leave to have "One good swear at him." He, too, it was found, was sitting quietly in the camp at the time. His offer was refused, and he went grumbling away.

The trial came on. The Reverend Jabez Clitters was triumphantly acquitted, and received the congratulations of his numerous friends.

Stebbins was not expelled; but the papers are so

greatly mutilated, that it is impossible to know exactly on what ground his trial was conducted. That it was not on the charge of falsehood, enough remains to enable the compiler to state with confidence. But, whether it was because he was a tailor—or because he was lame—does not distinctly appear. It, however, does appear, that after both were acquitted, Stebbins was earnestly interrogated as to the distinctness of his memory, of the very words uttered by Jabez. At first he was confident that he heard them, and could not, he said, be mistaken. But, on further inquiry, he acknowledged that from the moment the child seized the ear of the Reverend Jabez with its teeth till it fell to the ground, the visage of Jabez was so frightfully distorted, that Stebbins was scared out of his wits, and ran as fast as his heels could carry him, to get rid of the sight.

This was enough. How could he hear distinctly when he was so frightened? He was, no doubt, honestly—mistaken.

After the greater part of the crowd had gone away, an old woman got up from one of the benches in the back part of the meeting-house where the trial had taken place, and went to a group of four or five preachers who were gathered around the Reverend Jabez Clitters, and congratulating him on the happy result.

“When are you going to try Brother Clitters on the *main* thing?” she said, addressing her question to a heavy set and very fat preacher who was nearest to her. “I have come here to hear that trial.”

“Why, sister Bulger, the trials are all over. Brother Clitters has been most honorably acquitted. The charge bore the stamp of gross absurdity on its very face, be-

cause Brother Clitters, it was admitted, was at the very time trying to save his property; he had it in his arms, and was bearing it off; and to think that he would have it d——d at that time, is a palpable contradiction. Falsehood, sister, always bears its own impress on its face."

"Yes," said sister Bulger, "that's all right enough. I don't believe that he ever said them bad words at all, and no body ever could persuade me to believe any such thing; but the *main thing* has been looked over."

"Why, sister Bulger, how can you say so? Ah, you were sitting too far back, and the house was too crowded to enable you to hear well. We have tried the whole case. Brother Clitters is honorably acquitted, I assure you. We hail his return to the ministry, from which he has been temporarily suspended during the pendency of these charges, with rapture. We can not afford to loose so efficient a laborer in the vineyard at this time, when every year a caravan of foreign beasts is brought, as a show, into the settlement."

"You have not said any thing to him about taking away old blind Minna's child?"

The preacher raised both his hands and opened his mouth with the utmost astonishment. "Sister Bulger, sister Bulger—what are you talking about? Why, my dear sister, that child was his property; and as executor, of course, it was his duty to take the stolen article from the thieves who had stolen it. Try him—try Brother Clitters, and for doing his duty, sister! What in the world are you thinking of!"

The other preachers, except Clitters, who sat silently in a chair, gathered around sister Bulger.

"Dear me," said a young, weazen faced minister,

with a piping voice, "how untaught some of our membership still are? And what great need there is for increased zeal and activity in our labor. There is our sister, rather an intelligent woman, who has, perhaps, been twenty years a member of our church, and she has yet to learn that we Southern Methodists have two great doctrines to sustain in the face of a gainsaying world, lying in wickedness. The doctrine of sanctification—and the doctrine of slavery. It is true that present circumstances requires us to bestow a little more time and attention on the last, than on the first: but still we bear up and sustain these great Christian doctrines before a scoffing world."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE next day, very early in the morning, Wilson came over to the tavern and called Giles out on the porch.

After a short interview with him, Giles returned.

“Mr. Strong, my old friend Wilson here says he wants to have some private and very particular conversation with me. Can you get along without me for half an hour?”

“Oh, yes, Giles, I can spare you for that length of time; but let me advise you not to be alarmed again about the Union. It never can be dissolved without the consent of the people. Thousands of just such men as you are must vote on that question before it can be done, and you can determine for yourself whether you are likely to vote for a dissolution or not?”

“I see that, squire. ‘I’m for Union, and nothing but Union, now and forever.’”

Wilson and Giles went to the same place, and sat down on the same log on which they had sat a few days before, when Giles became so frightened about the Union and the American eagle.

“Neighbor,” said Wilson, “this thing has become quite airnest—I’m consarned about it.”

“Oh, I tell you, Mr. Wilson, we air in airnest, allers was so from the start—both mean to go on with it. We’re both of full age, Mr. Wilson, and know what we are about.”

"Well, Mr. Giles, when two people air in airnest about such a thing as that, there 's no stopping them, even if anybody had the right to, which, in this case, no one has, you know. The thing has gone so fur now, that I 'm consarned about it."

"Yes, we 've got more nor half through now. We 'll have it all over by next Tuesday night, or next Wednesday at the furthest. The beginning of such things is allers the hardest, 'specially if you have to sit on a hard cheer—a split bottom one is the best in all sich cases ; but when you get a little way along, it 's mighty pleasant, I tell you, Mr. Wilson."

"Mr. Giles, I 'm glad to hear you say so. The union will be agreeable all round."

"I guess it will—I guess it will. That glorious old bird, the 'Merican eagle, must not be plucked for anybody. Not a feather must be pulled out of his tail."

"No," said Wilson, "we 'll have a turkey. Will you come over to our house next Wednesday ?"

"If we get through, I will ; but I 'll be thar sartain next Thursday morning, if nothing happens to hinder me. Don 't have no fear about our Union. It 's a safe and a sure thing as long as we live."

"Old friend," said Wilson, taking Giles' hand, "I 'm glad to hear you say so. It moves a great burden off of my mind. I had my doubts at first ; but the thing 's gone so far now, and so many people are talking about it, that it can 't stop here. Something must be done one way or the other soon. It 's settled now."

"Yes," said Giles, "the thing 's as sure as shootin' ; but my half hour is most out ; let 's hurry back to the house. The faster we work the sooner we get done, you know, neighbor."

Nothing of especial interest occurred at the tavern till the next Wednesday morning, when Giles came into Strong's room greatly excited.

"What's the matter, Giles?"

"Why, squire, when Mr. Wilson were here a few days ago, him and me had a talk. I were talking about our glorious Union, and he were talking about Betsy Jones. He says I promised to marry her, and he's gone and killed a shoat and a turkey, and his women folks have baked an oven full of pies, and he's got the licence, and the preacher and lots of people are to be thar at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, for to see me married to her."

"Why, Giles, how could such a mistake have been made? You surely have not been trifling with Mrs. Jones' feelings."

"Squire, I never said one word to her nor to him about it in all my life. I never even squeezed her hand, though she's squeezed mine half a dozen times—it's a fact, squire. But what shall I do, squire? Wilson's in the other room a waiting to take me over to his house."

"Go and tell him, Giles, that I am not quite done yet, and you must stay with me to-night. We must revise the whole papers now, which will take us till midnight."

"That's a fact, squire. I'll go and tell him softly, so as not to hurt the feelings of an old friend, and then I'll think the matter over to-night, and make up my mind what I'd better do."

The next morning, at breakfast, the landlady told Mr. Strong, as she was pouring out a cup of coffee for him, that about ten o'clock the night before, Giles paid

his bill, took his basket, with his badger in it on his arm, and started on foot to the railroad station, saying he was going down to Nashville. She said she was surprised at his sudden departure, and that he looked as if something had happened to him, and walked very fast when he went away for an old man.

"Did he take that bottle of Shaker linament with him, madam?" said Mr. Strong.

"No, sir. He looked at it, and asked me if I thought he could walk any faster if he used some of it? I told him I thought it would do him good."

About ten o'clock Wilson came over, and learned from the landlady that Giles had left the place.

Wilson rode slowly and sadly away.

At two o'clock Mrs. Betsy Jones rode up on her mule.

"Mr. Giles is runaway, I 'se heard?"

"Yes, madam," said Strong, "he left last night. He took me completely by surprise. He never hinted any such purpose."

"Oh," said Betsy Jones, seating herself on a chair, and covering her face with her hands, "this is a world of trouble—disappointment and vexation is the lot of men and women too, here below. Who would have thought that Mr. Giles—such a good man as he is—would trifle so with a widder womans' feelings, and break her heart!"

"Do you owe him any thing, Mr. Strong?"

"Yes, madam, I owe him two dollars and fifty cents, which I am ready to pay when he calls for it."

"I think you ought to pay it to me; 'cause, you see, I'm in a manner his widder, and we've had to pay for

the license and the preacher, besides killing a shoat when there was no occasion for it."

"The papers you have brought to me are so valuable, and throw so much light on some parts of my researches, that I am willing, madam, to pay you two dollars and a half; but, I will also pay Giles what I owe him, if ever I meet him again."

"Well, I'll take the money," said Betsy Jones, as she took a quarter eagle, "and if you do see Mr. Giles, tell him I forgive him on condition that he 'll come back as soon as possible, and do what he told Brother Wilson he would do; but, on no other condition will he have Betsy Jones' forgiveness—tell him *that*."

"I will, madam."

Mr. Strong put the papers, and the old suuff box and its contents back into the keg; helped Mrs. Jones on her mule, and put the keg on the animal's neck before her. She leaned over it, and rode away humming a hymn tune, and crying, "She said she always did so when she thought of Brother Jabez; he was so good."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ABOUT a week after the hunt, one of Rashleigh's servants informed him that a man—a plain, sober, honest looking man, he said, was in the 'all, and wanted to see him. He was told to shew the person into Mr. Rashleigh's room.

"My name," said the man, "is Thomas Card. I live in the neighboring village, and am a carpenter. I want some advice about a matter that troubles me. I have heard that you are a well educated gentleman, and have ventured to call."

"I shall be happy to be of service to you, Mr. Card," said Rashleigh.

"The matter has grown out of the hunt which took place last week, of which, no doubt, you have heard, as it is well known everywhere."

"No, sir. I have not heard a word of it; but," he added, "I have not been off my plantation for two months, so that however notorious the affair may be, I have had no opportunity to hear of it."

Card then gave a full narrative of the capture of Minna's child, and added, "I am a class-leader in the church, and the woman, Minna, is a member of my class. I always respected her, and believe that as far as she knows, she is a Christian. Charges are preferred against her in the church, or, I should say, a single charge. She is accused of *stealing* the child—that is, Mr. Clitter's property; and as stealing is a sin, a viola-

tion of the commandment, she will be expelled, if she is found guilty. I don't feel quite right about the thing. It may be that I am biased in her favor, and that my compassion is having undue influence over my judgment, but I have not yet been able to see that she is wrong. We have already had one meeting on the subject, and discussed it. Several of the membership are on my side. The majority are against me. I stated my views to that meeting, and Brother Clitters, that is, one of our preachers, said to me, 'Is not the child my property by the laws of the State, and by the Constitution of the State, and by the customs of the country, and by the laws of the United States, and by the Constitution of the United States?' And after a moments study, I said, 'Yes; I suppose so, Brother Clitters.' And then he asked me what right has that woman to steal one piece of property more than another piece of property? If she stole a pig or a horse it would be sin, and is it not a greater and more heinous and horrible sin for her to steal a child, as that child is of more, and greater worth and value than many pigs and horses, and even than a whole drove of horned cattle? I could not answer him; but I think there must be something wrong in his reasoning. I have not been able to find the error, and will be glad if you will aid me."

"You erred," said Rashleigh, "in admitting that the child is *property by the laws of the State.*"

"How so?" said Card. "I never heard any man doubt that before."

"Slaveholding is SIN. And all the statues and constitutions that man may pile—one upon another—can not make it any man's duty to sin against God.

Every attempt by legislation or otherwise, to make sin law, is void, and leaves man's relations to his maker and to his fellow man, precisely as they stood before such legislation was made or attempted. God is the owner of this world, and its King, and all the attempts of men, in all nations, and in every age, by legislation or otherwise, to repeal any of His laws, are but folly. Men might as well attempt, by legislation, to declare that the sun shall not shine, or the wind blow, as to attempt to change any other law of NATURE and of GOD.

“The laws of God—all his laws, whether natural or revealed—are eternal; and the combined legislation of the whole world, can not suspend their operation for a moment. The Ten Commandments are in full force—although, as to half of them—loving God—obedience to parents—respecting the Sabbath—covetousness—there is little or no legislation of man.

“If all the laws of this State to punish men for murder were repealed to-morrow, the moral character of the act would be the same that it is to-day—as Cain murdered his brother before there was any human legislation to punish the crime.”

“I see that very clearly,” said Mr. Card.

“Then you also see that murder, theft, piracy, and such sins are intrinsically wrong, whether human laws sanction or condemn them.”

“I do, sir.”

“Man's rights,” continued Rashleigh, “are but the correlative of his duties. Man's duties are placed upon him by God. His duty to love God, to worship *Him*, to obey *HIM*, to love his neighbor as himself—all are laid upon him by the hand of his Creator. And I sup-

pose that in this country there are but few, if any persons, who will admit that human legislation can interfere with these duties. That question has been settled for ages.

"But, if that be admitted, the result that all laws tending even to sustain slaveholding are also void, follows of course; for the *right* is as certain as the *DUTY*. Slaveholding then is but a system of Atheism—not that open Atheism which denies the existence of God—but the more covert and subtle Atheism, which, while it admits his existence, denies his authority as legislator over his creatures.

"All the arguments of your church—that prove the free agency of man—of which it has furnished so many and of such great value to the world—also prove that slaveholding is sin. For if God Himself will not interfere with man's free agency, still less has he conferred upon one set of men the power to do so over other men. As slaveholding is a sin, the child in question is not the property of Mr. Clitters. The statutes which attempt to confer it upon Mr. Clitters, are mere nullities."

"Your reasoning seems to me correct, sir; but it would give offense, if I were to rely upon it. Can no other course of argument be adopted which will reach the same results?"

"No. If the statutes and constitutions to which the reverend gentleman refers—are *laws*, it is the duty of the parents of the child, as well as all other persons, to obey them—cheerfully to obey them. If that child is property, its parents have no right to take it from its owner. But it is not property, with the same absolute certainty that God is the Creator and King of this world."

"I thank you, Mr. Rashleigh, for your views," said Card, rising to depart. "Few people, however, even in the free states, from one of which I came a few years ago, concur with you in opinion. There the general opinion of the people seems to be that slaveholding is in some sense wrong, and should be restrained within its present limits; but that no person should interfere with it in the states in which it is established by law."

"I know, Mr. Card, that such are the popular notions of the day, but they are strangely inconsistent. If it is wrong, it is so every where. If it is right, it is so in all places and in all ages. No man should attempt to disturb slavery if it is right, nor to sustain it if it is wrong. Mr. Clitters has been guilty of two great sins. The first in robbing those people of their own child. The second in sustaining, by his example and influence, the acts of the legislature, made to support slavery, and the last act, in my very humble opinion, a greater sin even than the first."

"It would seem so," said Mr. Card.

CHAPTER XXIX.

VERY soon after the marriage of Grey Eagle and Huldah, it became proper that he should return to his duties as chief of his tribe. At first he left Huldah with his mother, and visited her from time to time; but he thought that under her disguise, as an Indian girl, she could not be discovered, and brought her to his own home. He was mistaken. Many people, both black and white, visited the camp, and it was rumored in the neighborhood, that the beautiful bride of the Indian chief was no other person than the fugitive slave of Norton.

Huldah was imprudent. In spite of the warnings of Grey Eagle, she exposed herself to observation at times, and to persons where detection and consequent recapture seemed to be almost certain. She insisted upon going with her husband to the chase, riding her black pony, and could not be confined in the cabin when the dances and other sports of the tribe were going on.

It was said that an expedition had been set on foot by Norton to take her. Old Isham, under the pretence of hunting for roots, visited the camp, and told Grey Eagle of the danger. Huldah was immediately sent to his mother's home, where, it was supposed, she would be well concealed and safe. While she was there, Grey Eagle, through the intervention of Rashleigh, who took a lively interest in his welfare, made an effort to purchase her from Norton.

Mr. Rashleigh's polite offer to buy her, without naming Grey Eagle as his principal, which would have compromised his friend, was repulsed not without rudeness on the part of Norton.

"I will not sell her to any person, nor for any price. She is my property," said Norton, "and living or dead I will have her, if I can find her. I'll make an example of her, so as to show my slaves that it is useless for any of them to run away. Their fate will only be worse when I get them back."

"I think, sir," said Rashleigh, "that you will be happier if you set her free."

"That, sir," said Norton, with increased rudeness, "is none of your business."

"You are mistaken," said Rashleigh, "it is my business, if I see you rushing toward a precipice, over which you may blindly fall and be killed—to shout aloud and warn you of your danger. If I see you pursuing a course which will lead to ruin, it is my right to advise you of it. I have no right to look, without sympathy, upon the misfortunes of others, and still less to be silent when, perhaps, a word may avert great calamities. Silence is a sin when a word may save a man from ruin."

"I thank you," said Norton, "for your gratuitous advice, and will profit by it when it is needed."

They parted. Rashleigh returned to his home, filled with sorrow because he had failed in his mission. Norton was angry, because his neighbor, as he said, had ventured to interfere with his domestic affairs.

Rashleigh found Grey Eagle awaiting him on his return, and told him the result of his interview with Norton.

"I am going," he said, "to Europe in a few days. Some of my servants are greatly dissatisfied with America, and wish to return to England. I will accompany them. I have other business there that needs my personal attention, and wish to visit my relations and friends. Come with me. You and your bride will be safe as soon as you land in England. Not one of the governments in Europe will aid in her recapture, or consent even, while she is but a sojourner in their dominions, to have her reduced to slavery. You have means to travel, and it will be a source of happiness to you for the residue of your life."

"Thank you," said Grey Eagle, "I will let you know in a few days whether we will go with you or not."

After consulting with Corliss and Huldah, Grey Eagle again visited Rashleigh at the end of three days, and agreed to accompany him.

They met at New York. Grey Eagle was accompanied by Huldah and her father. Rashleigh by four of his servants, who gladly bade adieu to America.

They landed in England, and after having leisurely seen in England as much as they could see in so short a time as six months, they went over, accompanied by Rashleigh, to Paris. Here he left them, and returned to his plantation in Tennessee, which he reached after an absence of about a year. Grey Eagle and his party went on to Rome.

They remained in Europe four years; and while they were there, they visited all the objects that generally interest travelers.

Our readers will not suppose that they were clothed in Indian costume. Grey Eagle had been educated at a New England college, and had seen much of the soci-

ety of intelligent people. His letters of introduction from Rashleigh, gave him and his party access to the most intelligent persons in the countries they visited. None knew that Huldah was a slave. None cared for her complexion, other than to admire it.

Corliss explained to his daughter all that needed explanation to her. She remembered now, with vivid distinctness, the objects of which she had read, while she was with Mrs. Mills.

Her mind expanded, and filled as it enlarged. She caught, with quickness, the tone of the society in which she moved, and her rude manners softened and refined. She seemed a new being. Her wild impulses were hushed into peace as she gazed on the wonders of art and genius which daily met her view.

Another cause too contributed not a little to this great change of character. Her little son nestled in her arms, and met her gaze, filled with all the tenderness of a young mother's love.

The time came at last when they turned their reluctant and unwearied feet from the "Eternal City," and left the land of the vine and the olive to come to America.

The voyage was short and pleasant to all others but Huldah. As the vessel sailed up to the city of Boston, and Huldah saw each moment, with greater distinctness, the stars and the stripes floating at the mast heads of a hundred ships, she turned pale and trembled. "I am a woman," she said, "and free wherever I have been, and now the first moment I shall retouch the land of my fathers—'my own, my native land'—I will be but a fugitive slave."

They returned to the old encampment in Tennessee,

and were cordially invited by Mr. Rashleigh to visit him. They did so, and Huldah and Grey Eagle became his guests for a few days, and then resumed their Indian costume, and returned to their tribe.

It was but a few days after her return, while Huldah was riding out on her favorite pony, she heard the screams of Minna, and was informed, by an Indian, of the capture of the child. In a moment—without waiting for reflection—she led in the pursuit, and urged some young Indians on, until she overtook the Reverend Jabez Clitters, and rescued the child.

It was done so quickly, that Jabez had no time to observe her. He had never seen her before, and could give no accurate discription of her person. All that he could say, was that she was a white lady, and was quite young, and small, and delicate in her appearance and figure; that she was dressed in black, and rode a small, black pony; that she had a wicked look, and her eyes glared and blazed upon him as the eyes of a tigress, and that she looked so very wicked, that he could think of nothing but hell, for half an hour after he saw her.

CHAPTER XXX.

WE must now invite the attention of our readers to Norton and his family.

Mrs. Mills still lounged on the old settee, and read and slept as good naturedly as ever. Norton attended to the business of his plantation, not, however, without a restless wish to become a member of the State legislature, and to play his part in public life. The slaves toiled on in sunshine and in rain, as they had toiled all their lives.

One day a negro boy ran into the room exclaiming: "Mrs. Mills, a carriage is coming up to the house and two ladies in it, and Master Ned is riding on his hoss by the side on it, and talking to the ladies, and whipping his hoss to keep close up to the carriage."

"Ah," said Mrs. Mills, rising from the old settee, "Mr. Norton's aunt and cousin are coming at last. I have been looking for them for a week;" and the good lady went to the door to meet them.

The aunt, Mrs. Kite, was nearly six feet high. Her cheek bones were the most remarkable part of her face. They stood out in great knots by the side of her small, grey eyes. The daughter, Miss Mary Kite, was about sixteen years of age, a chubby girl, with a round, full face, and small features. The ladies waited at the carriage door, until a pile of band-boxes, and trunks, and bundles, was taken out, and then Mrs. Kite took Norton's arm, and went into the house.

"Oh, Edward," she exclaimed, as she seated herself in a rocking chair, "do, for the Lord's sake, get me some camphire or I shall expire in two minutes, I am so greatly fatigued. The miserable roads you have in this western country, have nearly extinguished what little life there is in me."

A bottle of camphor was brought, and Mrs. Kite held it to her nose for a minute, and then placing it on her lap, she leaned her head against the back of the chair. "This, she said, is exhilarating and refreshing to my almost exhausted condition."

"Wait a bit, aunt," said Norton, "and Mrs. Mills will bring you some of her excellent current wine."

"Do, Edward, have it brought soon or I shall expire," and she again shut her eyes, and leaned her head against the back of the chair. "The wretched and abominable roads have fatigued and almost annihilated me. I will expire if I am not immediately relieved from the sensations that cause my heart to palpitate as if it would burst."

A boy brought a decanter of wine, and Mrs. Kite drank off a tumbler full. "I am greatly relieved now, Edward. Vitality is returning to my almost exhausted frame. After an hours rest, I opinionate I shall be reanimated, and re-established in health, and regenerated and refreshed."

"You will feel very differently then, aunt," said Norton, with great respect.

"Yes, Edward, yes. Tired nature's sweet restorer, a little balmy sleep, will call back my half-extinguished vitality, and regenerate me as Pope says. But conduct me to my apartment, if you please, Edward, and let my exhausted body have rest, and refreshment, and repose."

Mrs. Mills conducted the ladies to their room for "rest, refreshment, and repose."

In an hour Miss Mary Kite came out of her room.

"Couthin, Edward, what a delightful plathe you have here. Oh! it must be tho thweet to wander alone in the wild woods, and hear the little birdthes thing on evry branth, and feel the balmy thouth wind fanning your theeks, and to see the little lambs skipping ore flowery meads, and cropping the grass by the rivers brink, and to hear the turtle dove cooing. I am sure I shall die with pleasure in less than a week."

"Cousin Mary, I hope you will enjoy yourself very much while you are here."

"Oh, it ith the most delightful plath that the fond imagination of foward youthful fancy can conthieve of "Little boy," said she, speaking to a negro boy about seven years old, whose only dress was a tow shirt and pants, the latter torn in great holes at both knees, "run out and bring me a bunch of rothes with the dew on."

"Can't do it, Miss," said Jake; "roses all dun gone, long ago."

"Bring me some flowers."

"They ain't no flowers, Miss, only jimpson-weeds."

"Oh, dear," said Miss Mary, fanning herself, "how rural, and sweeth, and delightful this plath is, it reminds me of the poets, Arcadia."

"That thar place jines this, Miss. Mr. Rashleigh lives thar."

Miss Mary screamed with delight. "Only think," she said, "I've seen Arcadia, which the poets write about, and now my cheeks are fanned with the balmy breezes that blow over its beds of thyme, and meads of flowers."

"They ain't got no beds of time over thar, Miss," said Jake, "but the're got a big one of inions."

"Boy," said Miss Mary, "show me the place where the turtle doves do build their nesths."

"Yes, Miss," said Jake, stooping down and pointing with his finger to an object which could be seen through a window, "do you see that crab-apple tree down thar by the hoss pond? A turtle dove made a nest thar last spring, but a chicken hawk cotch it and teared it all to flinders."

"Oh, cruel hawk!" said Miss Mary. "Cousin Edward, do you know Harriet Gilpin? She was a school mate of mine at Bethlehem, and is such a thweet girl. They moved from Virginia out to Tennessee, and may live some where in this part of the state!"

"I do know her. Mrs. Gilpin lives quite near us; she has a daughter, Harriet, who is about your age. Mrs. Gilpin's father is a Mr. Brandon."

"The very thame," said Miss Mary. Oh, I shall thie with rapture. Let me fly to her on the wings of a thove, and press her to my enraptured heart. I shall die with delight when I thee the thweet girl."

"I will send a servant to her with a note, if you will write one, and she will probably call on you to-morrow."

"Oh, thear, I shall thream of the thear girl all night. I shall thie with rapture when I embrace her."

Mrs. Kite now joined them. She had on a cap with a large bow of broad red ribbons on one side, and another bow of yellow ribbons on the other.

"I hope, aunt, that you have got some rest and are better."

"Yes, Edward, that glass of invigorating wine, and

the invigorating effects of a balmy slumber of an hour, have re-established my almost exhausted system, and I am now regenerated and refreshed."

"Your looks, aunt, informed me of that as soon as you came out of your room."

"Oh, you flattersome individual! Do not attempt to tantalize me by any such fulsome epithets. Above all things in this mundane world, Edward, I do not like an ingenuousness."

"Aunt, you will, I hope, find me frank hearted and open as the day. I fear only that I shall offend you by my frankness."

"Never fear, Edward, I shall die unless you are the soul of candor."

"Oh, couthin Edward!" said Miss Mary, handing him a note which she had written to Harriet Gilpin, "do my dear couthin, thend this off on the wings of the wind; let your messenger fly with it to my dear Hatty. I shall thie with impatience until he returns."

"Here, Jake," said Norton, "take this note and carry it over to Brandons, and give it to the young lady, thar."

"Master, may I ride? The old hoss is in the field, a doin' nothin' but eatin' grass."

"Yes, catch him and get a sheepskin for a saddle and be back quickly."

"Yes, Massa."

In three hours Jake made his appearance on the porch, and Miss Mary sprang to meet him. "Oh, give me the answer to the letter from my thear Hatty."

"I ain't done gone thar yet, Miss, I jist catch the hoss an cum for the sheepskin to ride on. I be back mighty soon."

"Fly, fly," said Mary, on the wings of the wind, you are the messenger of love, to-day, Jake."

"Yes, Miss, I bin to mill this mornin' and tuk a grist of corn, and now I'll tote your letter too quick."

After an absence of six hours, Jake came back with a note from Harriet Gilpin, in which she stated that she was delighted to hear that her friend was so near to her, and that her mother and herself would call early the next day.

Miss Mary read the note, and exclaimed, "Oh, thear the rapture, only to think that I shall see my thear, thear Hatty to-morrow. It's a thream of bliss."

Early the next day, Harriet and her mother came to Norton's while Norton was absent. They had never seen Mrs. Kite, and were introduced to her by Miss Mary.

"I am perfectly enraptured with the wilderness," said Mrs. Kite. My dear Madam, how glad I am that I made this excursion; it is an indisputable verity that the high roads we have traversed in our tedious journey are in a state of such dilapidation that it is excruciatingly tormenting to traverse them, but we have now reached our destination, and have reason to rejoice at the termination of our wayfaring. We will sojourn here a few weeks and then retrograde home.

"The roads here are quite bad," said Mrs. Gilpin. "I am sorry to hear that your stay among us will be so short.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Kite, "business, Madam, business of tremenjous importance, that can neither be deferred nor postponed, make it imperatively necessary that my sojourning here shall be as brief as possible."

The young ladies met and embraced each other.

Miss Mary said, "Oh, my thear Hatty! I feel as if I should thie with rapture. It has been three whole years since we parted, and I have had but four letters from you in all that time."

"I would have written oftener, but we were getting ready to move, and when we did move, we had a long journey here, and some delay in getting settled. I will be more punctual hereafter."

"Oh, my thear Hatty! how charming is this wilderness! What sweet repose may our souls find in wandering by the purling streams that dash their bright waters over moth-covered rocks, lying in the shade of overspreading sycamore trees, and as we gaze at the white sea-gulls skimming the smooth face of the plathid water, and while we wander by moonlight over banks covered with cowslips and pansies and theet thented thyme. It is the happy valley of Rasselias, the abode of peath and contentment. I shall thie with rapture or live only in a thream of extatic bliss."

"It is a beautiful country," said Miss Hatty, "and will, I have no doubt, be much more so when it shall be filled with people."

"Oh, how you do shock me!" said Miss Mary, "that will utterly ruin it. It is the wilderness, the wild, wild wilderness in which my soul delights. The foot prints of man will destroy the rich and varied garniture which nature has flung with a lavith hand over her works, and in which she loves to dithplay her most wondrous tharms."

"My thear, thear Hatty, it is the lonely wilderness in which my soul bathes itself in an ocean of blith. I want to see the wild bird leaping over the green twigs, and to hear the thrush and the nightingale sing at

midnight amid wild rose bushes, while the crescent moon is brightly shining above them in the clear blue sky and gentle breezes breathe there over the glad earth and angels sing their evening thongs over the grave of some departed saint. My soul longs for blith as the heart panteth after the water brooks."

"We have neither nightingales, nor thrushes, nor cowslips here, my dear Mary, but we have mocking-birds and flowers perhaps as beautiful as those of which we have read in English books. Our happiness depends chiefly on ourselves, and we can, if we will, be happy in almost all places, and under all circumstances. Sometimes, indeed, we can not control our destiny, and must submit to misfortunes, when it is God's will that we shall suffer."

CHAPTER XXXI.

MRS. KITE ordered her carriage.

"Where shall I drive, madam," said the servant.

"I have a particular locality in contemplation, Ned. Take me by the most frequented thoroughfare to one Tom Giles."

"Stop here," said Mrs. Kite, "I will enter that habitation and see how the rustics in this country live. Who lives here, Ned."

"I've been told, madam, it's the man they call Tom Giles."

The lady got out of the carriage, and walked with a slow and stately pace, her silk dress rustling as she did so, to the cabin. A flock of white haired urchins ran into the cabin as she approached, and all rushed out together, nearly knocking her down, as she came to the door.

"Good morning, Mrs. Giles. I thought I would invigorate my system by athletic exercise this morning, and have ventured, during my excursion, to call and pay my respects to you. I hope I find you in good health, madam."

"Yes, ma'm, mighty well—'cept a thunderin' pain in my back."

"Take the chair, ma'm."

Mrs. Kite took a seat. "I am sorry to be informed of your great affliction, Mrs. Giles. You find this loca-

lity salubrious and productive of longevity—do you not?"

"Yes, ma'm. It's a fine place to raise sweet taters and water-melons; most too near the mountain though for cotton to grow good."

"Mrs. Giles, who inhabits that magnificent mansion that I observed on the eminence as my carriage traversed the road from Mr. Norton's to this locality."

Mrs. Giles stared at her. "I don't rightly know what you mean, ma'm. I reckon you want to know who lives in the first house back here a piece?"

"Yes, Mrs. Giles. That is what I desire."

"Mr. Rashleigh, an Englishman, lives thar, ma'm. The people hereabouts don't like him. He's a ristocrat, and has been away and jist come back, and keeps himself mighty close at home, ma'm."

"You observed, Mrs. Giles, that Mr. Rashleigh seldom ventures to present himself to public observation."

"No, ma'm. I never heard of his bein' a candidate for the legislature. Thar's no use in it, for nobody would vote for him."

"Is Mr. Rashleigh accessible to visitors, Mrs. Giles?"

"He's mighty perlite when people goes to his house, but he ain't sociable at all."

"I am delighted," said Mrs. Kite, rising, "with your situation, and the wonderful fertility of the soil around your place of abode."

"Yes, ma'm, the patch of corn, and lima beans, and sun-flowers that you are a looking at, is mighty thrifty indeed. I tended 'em myself."

"You deserve great credit for your assidooity, Mrs. Giles."

"No, ma'm. We did not do it with a jack-ass—we tuk a mule. Martin Luther rid the mule, and John Calvin, he followed arter, and unkivered the corn, and I plowed."

Mrs. Kite was standing in the door of the cabin. Four little Giles' were standing at a short distance off, staring her in the face. Martin Luther and John Calvin were down in the road by the carriage, looking at it, and talking to Ned, the driver.

"Mrs. Giles, I wish to have some private conversation with you, if I can have it without intrusion or observation."

"Ma'm?"

"Mrs. Giles, I wish to converse with you unobserved."

"Yes, ma'm. Let's go behind the house."

They started, and the little Giles' trooped after them, till Polly seized a limb of a tree, covered with brush, and after a hot chase, routed the group. They ran to the carriage, and climbed up on the wheels.

"Mrs. Giles, I have a matter in hand that requires my diligent attention, and with which I must proceed with great circumspection."

Polly seemed greatly frightened, and was disposed to run.

"You can help me, Mrs. Giles, and if you will, I will reward you for your labor. I will give you five dollars if you will do it."

Polly understood this speech readily enough. "I'll do what I ken for you, ma'm. What is it you want of me?"

"My nephew, Mr. Edward Norton, with whom I conjecture you are acquainted?"

"Oh, yes, ma'm. I knows him like a book. We's been livin' close by him for more nor five years."

"Mr. Norton then had a slave girl named Huldah. Have you ever seen her?"

"No, ma'm. I've often heard of her, but she run away afore I got to see her."

"Well, we believe that girl is the wife of Grey Eagle, but are not yet quite sure of it. I wish you to take a box of ribbands to the camp to sell."

"Ain't got no ribbins, ma'm, only one old dirty white one on my go-to-meeting bonnet."

"I will furnish them to you; they are in a box in the carriage. Take them to the camp, and exhibit them to Grey Eagle's wife. Don't let her place the box on a stand or table, but get her to stoop down to look at them in the basket. and as she does so, observe, Mrs. Giles, whether there is a crescent shaped scar on the bone of her right cheek, about half an inch long, and a straight mark near her left ear on her left cheek."

"Do you mean like water-melons, ma'm?"

"No, no, Mrs. Giles. I mean a little mark like the new moon in shape."

"Yes, ma'm. I'll go thar to-day."

Mrs. Kite delivered the box of ribbands to Polly, and drove back to Nortons.

"How rejoiced I am, Mrs. Mills, that you remember with such vivid distinctness, the size and shape of the marks made by Abe in his fight with that girl, Huldah. I believe your remarkable memory will be the means of enabling cousin Edward to recapture her."

"I have good reason to remember them well, Mrs. Kite, for the wounds made by the scratches from Abe's fingers inflamed, and were near a week in healing, and I put some cort-plaster on them."

"Edward has made two or three unsuccessful efforts to recapture that girl, and all of them have been unsuccessful, because he has not the tact of woman added to the energy of man. I will show him that women make as good generals as men. He has promised to bestow on me the girl's child as a present, if I shall devise a scheme by which the girl and child may be retaken, and I will do it."

"I hope you may," said Mrs. Mills, "for she's a good servant—a little wild though; but with all her faults, a good servant, and I want her to read to me. The child, of course, would only be in my way."

In the evening Mrs. Polly Giles came over to Norton's.

"What success did you meet with in your enterprise to-day, Mrs. Giles?"

"Oh! I didn't get no prize, but I sold her two dollars worth of ribbins, and here's the money she gin me."

"Did you follow my instructions, Mrs. Giles?"

"Yes, ma'm. I see her face. It were close to mine, and she's got that very half cent scar right whar you said it were, and the tother scar too, and a beautiful little boy, all dressed up as nice as a king."

"Thank you, Mrs. Giles; here's a five dollar bill."

"Air you sure it's good, ma'm?"

"Oh! yes, Mrs. Giles, it's current money."

"No, ma'm," said Polly. "I aint so easy to be tuk in as you think for. This ain't curren' money at all. Look here (holding the bill close to a candle at the table)—jist look here."

Mrs. Kite looked at the bill.

"For all I can't read I knows curren' money as well as any body. Here's a plow, and thar's a wheat sheaf,

but there ain't no curren bush on it. That 'ar bush by the plow may be a goosberry one, but it's no curren bush. Please give me another—a curren' one. This ain't good."

Norton looked at the bill. "Why, Mrs. Giles, this bill is as good as wheat. Don't you see the wheat sheaf thar?"

"Yes, sir. Well, if it's as good as all that, I'll take it.

"Thank you, ma'm. I'll go agin when ever you want me to."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE time was drawing near when the good people of the county in which Norton lived were to elect their representative in the state legislature. Edward Norton was announced as a candidate, and many of his neighbors warmly favored his pretensions. He was so kind, so social, so every thing that a legislator should be, that few persons could be named who were half so well qualified for the place.

But still the "Star in the West," the newspaper published in the county, had not declared itself in his favor. The editor indeed published the names of the several candidates, but was discreetly silent on the subject of his preference. Norton had long eagerly looked forward to the place as the goal of his ambition, and determined to spare neither pains nor expense to accomplish his object.

He visited the place where the editor lived, and found him, Jeptha Jothram, Esquire, a gentleman who had a very red face, and very dirty hands. He was a little tipsy when Norton entered, and was leaning back in his chair with his feet on a table before him, and smoking a bad cigar.

"Ah! old fellow!" said he as he held out two fingers of his left hand to Norton, "I am glad to see you. What are the signs in the political horizon in the eastern part of the county? Are you all ready to meet this great crisis? The country, I assure you, is trem-

bling on the very brink of eternal ruin, and unless we unite—unless we are united, sir, heart and soul, as one man, and bury all our past differences, and lay aside all our bickerings, that great rascal, Col. John Reddich, will be elected over our heads, and the state will be eternally ruined, sir."

"The whole country, Mr. Norton, is looking on this great contest with intense interest. I had a letter only yesterday from Col. Stunt, United States Senator, who urged me to do my duty, and my whole duty, in this great contest. I got another, only this morning, from the honorable James Littlejohn, member of Congress, from North Carolina, informing me that the administration takes a profound interest in this great contest, and wishes all our friends to unite and be at the polls. Are you all ready in your part of the county? It is our strong hold—if you fail—if you fail now—defeat is certain. Our enemies—the enemies, I should say, of republican government—are not asleep. They are always wide awake and vigilant."

"We intend to do our duty, Mr. Jothram, at the coming election. We know very well how vitally important the questions are on which we, the people, have now to vote. We will be on hand and do our whole duty. We have never been found wanting."

"Right, sir, very right, sir," said Mr. Jeptha Jothram, taking his cigar from his mouth: "your neighborhood is our tenth legion."

"You know," said Norton, "that some of my neighbors have insisted on my becoming a candidate for the nomination."

"My dear sir," said Jeptha Jothram, Esquire, "no man on earth doubts your high qualifications for the

office. We will be delighted to support you next year—*next* year, sir. Mr. Norton, next year the coast will be clear, and all your political friends will rally as one man to your support. But this year, sir,—this year, the danger of defeat is so imminent and the crisis so great, that we must all lay aside our individual preferences, and rally around the standard, no matter who may be bearer of that standard. Patriotism demands this great sacrifice.

“Our country—our whole country is looking upon us. The President and all his cabinet—all the clerks in Washington will stand on tip-toe waiting eagerly for the returns from this election, as soon as it shall be over. One vote—one vote, sir, may at this election determine the result. This is no time, sir, to indulge in individual preferences.”

“You may rely on us, Mr. Jothram. We will vote for the nominee of the party, but at present we have some interest in having a nomination made that will awaken the enthusiasm of the whole people in his support.”

“My dear sir, you are right—very right in your views. But just now at this crisis, that seems hardly an open question. Colonel Peter Hilts, you know, is a candidate. He has warm friends, and if he shall be nominated he will get the support of many of our political foes. He is a Methodist, you know, and has a host of relations and personal friends, each one of whom has great influence. I do not speak for myself, but all the friends of our party that I have seen for a week past—and I have seen a great many of the leading men of our party—all of them say that Hilts is our strongest man—our most available candidate. If

we get him nominated, they say, we will cut into our foes to the tune of two hundred votes."

"I do not care much about the nomination on my own account, I assure you, Mr. Jothram."

"Certainly not, sir," said Jothram, crossing his feet upon the table—certainly not, sir. I never saw a candidate who did. You care only for your country."

Norton looked a little abashed at this speech, but soon rallied.

"I have heard since I came here, with great pain, I assure you, that we are in danger of losing the press. That that old shylock, Tim. Haggerty, has a judgment against you for groceries furnished for your family, and is about to levy on the press, not so much for the purpose of getting the debt as to stop the press just before the election."

"It's true, sir—too true—subscribers don't pay—won't pay—the people can't be aroused to a full sense of their danger and their duty. I am sitting here waiting for the constable or the sheriff to come in and stop me. I don't know at what moment he may enter. But I'll do my duty, sir, to the last. I'll stand on the deck and sink or swim with the ship. Live or die, no man shall say that Jeptha Jothram ever flinched from his duty, down to the last moment of his political life. Personally I care nothing about it. I have made sacrifices of time, and, my friends say, of talents, for the cause. If the press shall be taken by the bloodhounds of the law from me, I can turn my attention to other and far more profitable pursuits. The whole world will then be open before me. Fame and Fortune have long with their syren songs been trying to allure me

from the post of duty,—the Editorial chair of the ‘Star in the West:’ devoted to the maintainance of liberty. But, sir, Fame and Fortune may sing until they are hoarse, Jeptha Jothram will stay at his post, content with poverty, so that he saves his party—and his priceless honor, sir—his priceless honor.”

“ My dear sir,” said Norton, “ no one ever doubted or can doubt your honor. Since that affair you had with Colonel Totterall, a few years ago, that has been placed beyond suspicion and above reproach. I believe you killed him at the first fire?”

“ Yes,” said Jeptha Jothram, with a sigh, “ he did fall, poor fellow, at the first shot. My bullet pierced his heart. His ball grazed my left temple. This is only one of the thousand sacrifices I have made for my party—my country, but yet, here am I to-day, Mr. Norton, a poor creature, without a dollar to help myself, and in hourly expectation of a visit from the sheriff, or a constable, to levy on my property. Republics are ungrateful—at least they have the appearance of being so.”

“ Mr. Jothram, I have just thought of a method of relieving you from your embarrassment.”

“ What is it, Mr. Norton? Speak out.”

“ What is your press and the printing materials and the fixtures in your office worth at a fair cash price?”

“ At least fifteen hundred dollars, and all will be sold within twenty or thirty days for a song. My political enemies will shout in triumph over me. Our party will go down in this county, and, sir, in this State.”

“ Why don’t you borrow money on the credit of your press?”

"Borrow money, sir! Nobody has any to lend. Times are hard. Money is scarce, and those who have a little have use for all of it."

"Lest my motives should be misconstrued in what I am about to do, please hand me a pen and paper, Mr. Jothram."

Mr. Jothram did so, and Norton wrote a notice that from considerations of a private nature he declined the honor of submitting his name to the approaching convention as a candidate for the Legislature, and would heartily support the nominee of that convention, whoever he might be.

"Please," said Norton, as he handed the paper to Jeptha Jothram, "insert this in your next issue."

Jeptha Jothram read the notice and took it into an adjoining room. He came back in a minute saying, "The paper with your notice will be out to-morrow—your friends will be taken by surprise—but you are a man of soul or you would never have done such a thing. Our party now will succeed. Hilts will be elected without doubt, with your cordial support."

Norton coughed dryly. "The coast is clear now. No man can doubt my motives or your honor. Let me be frank. I take perhaps greater interest in the success of our party than might be expected from a mere private citizen. The press—it must be preserved. It must be fearless. It must be unshackled. It must be independent. Our enemies must not sing their songs of triumph over us. It would drive me mad."

"Ah," said Jeptha, "I see you have a soul."

"Well, sir, I wish to relieve the press. For yourself, personally, you know without the necessity of further assurance that I have the highest regard. And if you,

you only, were interested in this matter, I would not without your invitation make the proposal which I am about to make—but for our *party*, for our principles I have the right to do something.

“Certainly, sir,” said Jeptha Jothram. “This is a country of equal rights. The editor of a newspaper of the ‘Star in the West,’ for example, has no more rights than the humblest planter in the country. It is the boast of our institutions that all men are free and equal. I am equal to the king of England, sir—and the king of England is equal to me. If I were to meet with him, it would be my duty to treat him as a gentleman—to be courteous to him, and it would be his duty to treat me as a gentleman—to recognize my equality with him. So, too, with the Czar of Russia, with the President of the United States—with the King of France. Ah! Mr. Norton, believe me I would, notwithstanding my ardent Republicanism, treat any monarch in Europe as a gentleman. If he came into my sanctum, to have an hours chat with me, he could sit on that broken chair on which you now sit, and I would talk with him as freely and as kindly as I now talk with you.”

“No doubt of it, Mr. Jothram. But what I wish to say now is, that I take so great an interest in our cause that I am willing—(he paused for a moment and looked Jeptha steadily in the face)—I am willing to buy in these judgments and other outstanding claims against you, and take a mortgage on your press and materials to secure the repayment of the money—say within a year.”

“You do not want to have any control over the editorial department of the paper of course?” said Jothram.

"Certainly not, Mr. Jothram—certainly not. I know you too well to think of such a thing as that. Your political independence is too well known—too firmly established to be tampered with. My own honor, sir, would restrain me from any such conduct."

"Well, sir," said Jeptha, "the thing is intrinsically right. The editor of a newspaper has no greater interest in the success of his party, than any other man in that party, and should not be called upon to make any greater sacrifices for it. I have sacrificed my whole life almost for the party. But why talk of sacrifice. You will be safe. Your mortgage on the press will secure every dollar of your money, and interest upon it."

Norton obtained from Jeptha a list of his debts (as far as he could remember them), and paid them off. He then took a mortgage on the press and materials of the printing-office, and went home.

The next number of the "Star in the West" contained the card of Norton, informing the public that for reasons entirely private, he declined to submit his name to the convention. It contained also a long editorial article in which Norton's integrity—his honor—his fitness for the office of representative—were all lauded in language so gross, that Norton himself said, when he read it: "Jothram must have written this when he had half a pint too much liquor."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

NORTON called on the Reverend Jabez Clitters the next day after his interview with Jeptha Jothram. Mrs. Martha Clitters informed him that her husband was unwell, and could not see any person. Dr. Shelly had said that he must be very quiet, or he would not hold himself responsible for the consequences.

“My business with him, madam, is urgent, and not at all exciting. I wish to see him for a few moments only.”

Mrs. Martha Clitters left Norton in the front room, and soon returned. “He says he can see you as your business is urgent, sir.”

Norton was shewn into a back room. The Reverend Jabez Clitters rose to receive him, handed him a chair, and then sat and interlaced the fingers of his hands, and placed them on his breast. He extended his legs to their full length before him.

“I have heard of your misfortunes, Mr. Clitters, and am sorry for it. How are your ears to-day, sir?”

“I am thankful that they are better—much better. At the first and beginning of my misfortune, they would not heal, because they could not be inflamed and made to swell; but that excellent physician and surgeon, Dr. John Shelly, put a plaster of cantharides or Spanish flies upon them, and since that time they have inflamed and swelled. They continue to be inflamed and swelled, and will, in a little time, heal, and be well and sound.”

"I have no doubt of it. Your personal appearance, I see, is greatly improved; but, then, you have gained that improvement by great suffering."

"Yes, yes, indeed; suffering, and pain, and affliction is the lot of mortals in this mundane, and wicked, and lost world; but," he added, with a sigh, and a weak smile, "I endure it—I bear it—I submit to it with cheerfulness—with joy—and with resigned patience. Oh! sir," he added, looking at Norton, with a smile, "the virtue and grace of patience—they are sweet and delicious even as honey—yea, sweeter than honey in the honey comb!"

"I do not doubt it, sir. But I confess I have not much of it. A negro girl of mine ran away some five years ago, and I have not the least doubt but that she is now in the Indian camp, and the wife of that scoundrelly chief, Grey Eagle. I am impatient to catch her. She is the very girl who rescued that child from you, and robbed you of your property.

"I do not think that such impatience as that—impatience only to obtain our own—is at all wrong or vicious. If it were so, men would not be earnest and diligent in business, and in the occupations of life."

"Can't we, sir," said Norton, "unite our efforts in one common cause, and each recover his property? We have each heretofore made searches for our slaves, but they have failed. I have helped you, it is true, but one more grand hunt, in which all your friends will unite with mine, will result in securing our property to each of us."

The eyes of Jabez brightened. "I wish and desire much, and greatly to obtain and have that child. It is mine; but only as a trustee for benevolent and religious

purposes, and uses, and objects. If any plan can be adopted, and devised, and agreed upon, that will be successful, I will do all that I can to carry it into full and complete fruition and effect."

"Well, sir," said Norton, "I have the plan. If you will only get your friends to unite with us in great numbers, I am sure of success. Four hundred dollars worth of property is no light thing to lose, especially in such times as these. And then, sir, the injury you have suffered in your person, should induce you to use your utmost efforts to recapture that child."

"My personal injuries," said Jabez, "are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. Do not mention or name them. It is the cause of Zion, and the loss she has sustained—is sustaining, and I fear will sustain, that grieves and afflicts me. If that loss can be repaired, the man who aids me in doing and effecting it, will deserve the gratitude of his country, and of mankind; yea, all men, and even of women and children."

"I am glad, sir," said Norton, "that this affair has made us acquainted. I have often wished to visit you, but have not ventured to call. Besides, too, you are so often away from home, that I could not know when I would get to see you. I think that as we are neighbors, we will be friends."

"Yes, yes!" said Jabez, whose countenance shewed that he was flattered by this speech of Norton's, "I have a friendly feeling—even a brotherly regard for mankind. The duty, Mr. Norton,—the great duty of loving our neighbor even as ourselves, is too often and too greatly overlooked and neglected. It should be cultivated with as much attention as a precious plant—even as a blooming flower from Eden, and from Paradise.

But," he added, with a sigh, "the world—the world knows it not!"

"You are very right, no doubt, sir," said Norton, rather dryly. "I intend to bestow more attention upon it, than I have done. I wish very much, indeed, sir, to extend my acquaintance with some of the preachers of your denomination (in this county, I mean, sir,) and if you will enable me to do so, I will take it as a favor."

Jabez smiled again. "I will do it as soon as possible. As soon as I can be released from the painful circumstances in which I am placed."

"Are your ears still painful, sir?"

"Oh! no, no," said Jabez, "it is not that, that grieves and afflicts me at this present time and moment. Let me tell you, Mr. Norton, that I am now, at this time, under the painful circumstances of being disciplined by our church. Grave charges are made and preferred against me. Even the charge and accusation of profanity. It's said and charged, that at the time the negro child bit and devoured my ear—my right ear, I swore at it."

"Why, I should 'nt wonder, sir, if you did so. Job himself would have lost his patience under such circumstances. Nobody should pay attention to a hasty word uttered under such great provocation."

"Yes, but men of the world and Christians see such things in different and diverse lights and views. I do not think and believe such a charge a light one—it grieves me to the heart."

"Does it, indeed," said Norton, looking fully upon the Reverend Jabez Clitters. "Why, sir, you are too sensitive—too much so indeed, for this world. If I

were charged with saying the very same words, a hundred times over, I would not care a straw about it."

"Ah!" said Jabez, "the difference—the wide difference between a man of the world and a citizen of Zion."

"A citizen of where, sir?"

"Of Zion, Mr. Norton. I am a man who is only a stranger and a wayfarer and a sojourner here below, and whose home and habitation is above—pointing upward with his long fingers—whose dwelling place is in the skies."

"Oh!" said Norton, "I see it now. On what day had the hunt better take place? I have already told you I am impatient. Indeed, sir, one of my motives—one of the principal objects I have in view is to catch and punish my girl, Huldah, for her abuse of you."

"At any time and day you please, Mr. Norton—the sooner, however, the earlier the day the better it will be. I have no feelings of revenge or ill-will—not an unkind thought towards and against the poor frail, sinful, and wicked creature who did the deed. I carefully suppress and keep down all such feelings and emotions and thoughts. They are all of the earth—earthly, and do not become a man whose peace flows as a river—even as Jordan when his banks are full."

"Send word to me, if you please, Mr. Clitters, when you have an opportunity to make me acquainted with some of the preachers of your church, and I will ride over to see them."

"I will do so, Mr. Norton—I will do so. You will find them holy men. It will do you good—great good, to be with them. It will be a blessing to you."

The next day Norton sent a servant over to Mr.

Clitters, with a bundle of newspapers, and among others the "Star in the West," which had in it his card declining the honor of submitting his name for nomination to the convention, and the fulsome editorial article of Jeptah Jothram. He sent a note addressed to the Reverend Jabez Clitters, in which he stated that it afforded him great pleasure to send a trifle that might, perhaps, interest him while he was confined to the house by his sickness.

Jabez replied, and stated that he did not know Mr. Norton's name had been mentioned as a candidate for the Legislature until he saw his card in which he declined the honor, and that he fully concurred with the editor in all that he had said about the public loss. Yea, he added—he might have said much, very much, more about the fitness of Mr. Norton for the high and responsible position and office of representative in the legislature. If Mr. Norton had not declined he would have exerted his little and limited and feeble influence in his behalf—which would have been likewise, and at the same time of and for the benefit of the public and of the State.

Norton read his note with eager interest, and laid it carefully away.

In the afternoon of the day of the great church trials already mentioned, Norton received an invitation from the Reverend Jabez Clitters to come over and meet at his house a few ministering brethren who would take dinner with him:—in a plain way, he added—for we censure and condemn the sin and iniquity and wickedness of eating merely to gratify the appetite.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Cousin Ned," said Mrs. Kite, "it's well enough, as you are a candidate for the legislature, to associate with such people as the Methodists; but I am older than you, and intend you shall succeed. Let me give you a word of advice."

"Say on, Aunt Sally, you know that I have a most profound respect for your opinions."

"Oh, you flattersome creature, you. But what I want to tell you—to impress upon you, is this: Condescend to them as much as you can, but do it in such a way that they shall all the time feel that you are condescending to them. Let them see that you have great self-respect, and somehow people who greatly respect themselves in this world, are sure to obtain the respect of others. Let them see that you think yourself fit for any station, and they will at last concur with you in opinion. But one thing, dear Edward," she said, with a smile, "I beg of you—don't invite any of them to your house, at least, while I am here; it would be such a bore to entertain them."

"I assure you, Aunt, you have yourself proved that I did not flatter you. Your advice is sensible, and shall be carefully followed."

Norton rode over to dine with the Reverend Jabez Clitters, and got there about three o'clock in the afternoon of the day of the important church trials. Jabez and two of his friends were sitting in a small parlor.

Everything about the room was tidy and comfortable. A copy of Clark's Commentaries laid on a well polished mahogany side table, and a small book case, with glass doors, which were covered by blue curtains, stood at the other side of the room, which seemed to be filled with ponderous books.

Norton was duly introduced to the Reverend James Cray, and the Reverend Peter Callott. Mr. Cray was the small, narrow faced minister, whom we saw at the meeting-house, and who was so devoted to maintaining the doctrine of sanctification—and the doctrine of slavery. The Reverend Peter Callott was the minister to whom Sister Bulger addressed her inquiries on the same occasion.

The excitement caused by the trials had not yet subsided in the minds of Cray and Callott. Jabez was calm, composed, and quiet. He sat with his arms folded across his breast—sometimes apparently abstracted in meditation—at other times listening to the conversation of the two ministers, and weakly smiling at some remark made by the one or the other of them.

A negro boy came into the room and said: "Master, two gentleman is a coming."

"Ah," said Jabez, "one of them is Brother Shirkwell, I have no doubt, as I received a letter from him a week or ten days ago, stating and mentioning that he would visit this part of the State and country about this time, and I have been looking for him, and expecting him. I do not know who the other is; no doubt it is some brother who is traveling with, and accompanying him."

At the name of Dr. Shirkwell, Brother Cray raised both his hands and caught his breath, as he said to

Norton, who was seated by him: "Dr. Shirkwell—the great Dr. Shirkwell—a man who reads the Scriptures in the original languages; who has written more books than he has fingers and toes, and is one of the greatest preachers alive. A second Wesley, sir. A second Wesley."

Dr. Shirkwell walked with a slow and stately pace from the gate to the house. He was a tall, straight, dignified looking man, about sixty years of age. The minister who came with him was the Reverend William Stoor. He was more than six feet high, and very large. His features were harsh and almost repulsive, but there was, in his small, blue eye, an arch twinkle which indicated great love of fun.

Dinner was soon announced, and when Norton was seated at the table, he saw that Jabez had no reason to apologize for his fare. It was abundant and very good.

After Brother Cray had somewhat recovered from his abashment at the presence of the great Dr. Shirkwell, his mind returned to the subject on which it had been running all the morning, and he led off the conversation with the remark—

"Brother Shirkwell, we were just talking on the subject of sanctification and slavery when you came in, and I remarked that our church in the south is the standard bearer among the tribes of Israel of these two great doctrines, and we should—"

Here he paused, for he saw from the countenance of Dr. Shirkwell, that his remarks were not approved of.

"Brother, you are right—very right, indeed. Our church does sustain slaveholding and the doctrine of

sanctification. But a great deal depends, my young brother," said Dr. Shirkwell, with a condescending waive of his hand and bend of his head—"a great deal depends upon the *manner* in which our propositions are stated. It seems to me that you err (here he smiled upon brother Cray) in bringing the two doctrines so closely together so as to present them to the minds of the hearers at one view. It would be better to separate them, and preach, for instance, on sanctification, one day, without alluding to slaveholding—and at some other and distant time—preach on slaveholding, and show our membership that it is right."

"Ah! you're nearly right thar, Doctor—you're nearly right thar," said brother Stoor. They ought to be separated as widely as Heaven and Hell, and should never come together."

Dr. Shirkwell smiled and said, in under tone, to sister Martha Clitters, by whom he was seated, "Brother Stoor is a little eccentric, sister."

Sister Clitters was a very tall middle aged woman, with a long face, (whose only features worthy of remark, was, that her mouth, instead of being parallel with her forehead, began at the left corner in a line with her nose, and went aslant like a lady's hand-writing, toward her chin on the other side,) said, "Yes, he is a little so, but he seems so very pleasant."

"Brother," said Dr. Shirkwell, "I think we should not justify slaveholding. We should groan over it in spirit, and wish our membership could be relieved from it."

"Ah! Doctor—Doctor," said brother Stoor, "we have played that groaning game so long that it is of no use to go on with it. Nobody will believe us. The

people who are not slaveholders are laughing at us in their sleeves, and sometimes even to our faces. If any man wants to quit sinning he can do so if he will. That's good old Methodist and Christian doctrine. 'Whar thar's a will thar's a way.' If the laws of the State forbid a man to set his slaves free, no law forbids him to take them to some place where he can do so. I never saw or heard of a man who wanted to emancipate his slaves in right good earnest who did not do it. Doctor, that groaning game won't do. The Providence of God never compels a man to sin."

Dr. Shirkwell whispered to sister Clitters, "Brother Stoor is very eccentric—very eccentric, indeed."

"Yes," said sister Clitters, smiling, "I see that he is; but he's so frank."

"Brethren," said Dr. Shirkwell, addressing the company, "brother Stoor and I can never agree upon this subject. He seems to think that the world was made in one day, and not in six, as the Scriptures tell us."

Jabez looked up from his plate and smiled. "Do you think, Dr. Shirkwell, that slaveholding is sinful?"

Oh no, brother Clitters, not at all. But I think we should denounce and oppose the abuses of the institution. I suppose brother Stoor will agree with me in this."

"Ah! Doctor," said brother Stoor, striking the table with his clenched fist, so that the plates and tumblers rattled, that is like denouncing a man for not feeding and currying a stolen horse, and being silent about the theft."

"Brother Stoor is very eccentric," said Dr. Shirkwell to sister Clitters—very eccentric, indeed."

"Yes," said sister Clitters, with her face much longer than usual, he is alarmingly eccentric."

"Doctor," said sister Martha Clitters, "Do you think it wrong to hunt a runaway nigger? I ask you, because my husband hunted for one lately, and some censorious people in this neighborhood have hinted that it was not quite right for him to do so."

"My dear sister," said Dr. Shirkwell, laying down his knife and fork, "How can you ask such a question? Why, sister Clitters, the Constitution of the United States confers that right on all persons whose slaves escape from one State into another State. How can a thing be wrong when the Constitution of the whole Union sanctions it?"

"Ah! Doctor," said the Reverend Jabez Clitters, leaning back in his chair and looking steadily on his plate, while he proceeded in a low and solemn voice—that may do for a man of the world, Doctor, but for a man,

Whose peace flows as a river,
Even as Jordan,
When his banks are full,

The company all sat in profound silence, looking at Jabez, who slowly continued his remarks:

"The Constitution of the United States and the laws of the United States, and the constitution of Tennessee, have been made by fallible and erring men—they may do as guides and laws and rules of conduct for men of this world. But, for me,

Whose peace flows as a river,
Even as Jordan,
When his banks are full,

it is not enough."

"They will not do, Doctor," said Jabez, slowly shaking

his head—they will not do. I—I must have a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ That alone, will satisfy me.”

“Amen,” said brother Stoor, from the lower end of the table. “That’s it, brother Clitters.”

“Now, Doctor, I think and believe it is a canon or law of interpretation that when an article of property is mentioned in scripture, you may, in most cases, substitute another article or kind of property in its place and stead. As when a man is forbidden to steal a sheep, the rule applies with equal force and power to horses and horned cattle as well as to sheep.”

“It would seem so, brother Clitters—it would, I say, seem so, but I do not as yet speak positively, as I have not examined the original scriptures on that point.”

“Well, then, if a man have a hundred negroes and one of them runs away, doth he not leave the ninety and nine with the overseer, and go after that which hath fled; and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulder and beareth it home, saying to his neighbors, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found—my *nigger* which was lost.’”

“Negroes are property—sheep and horned cattle are property—goods and chattels.”

The whole company were surprised and delighted with this happy illustration. Norton said he never saw into the matter so clearly before. Dr. Shirkwell said, “That, brother Clitter, is a thought worth preserving,” and he pulled out a little red morocco pocket-book and a silver pencil, and immediately put down the heads of the argument.

Sister Martha Clitters began to cry and put her handkerchief to her face to hide her tears.

Brother Stoors looked puzzled, as if he thought

there was something wrong about the thing, but could not exactly discover where or how it was.

Jabez raised his eyes from his plate with a weak gentle smile that just curled the right corner of his mouth, "It is *that* that I rely on, brethren--*that* satisfies and suffices me."

Dr. Shirkwell put up his red morocco pocket-book and said—

"Brother Clitters, when I return home and have access to my library, I will examine the passage in the original Greek, and write you my views on the subject. It may be that when we shall make a new translation for the benefit of southern Methodists, that the word in the original which is now rendered 'sheep,' will just as well bear to be rendered 'negroes,' as both are property, and if so—if so, brother, the question will be settled—settled—put at rest forever."

"Do so, Doctor," said sister Clitters. "We will look eagerly for the letter."

The conversation soon slid over to other subjects, and Norton bore his full share in it in such manner that all the company were delighted with him.

As he was about to go away, the Reverend Jabez Clitters produced the last number of the "Star in the West," and read aloud in a slow and solemn tone, the editorial article referring to Mr. Norton.

Brother Cray looked at Norton with profound respect. Doctor Shirkwell was more cordial to him than he had been before, and as he bade him farewell, said he hoped that he would reconsider his purpose and give the state the benefit of his services. Jabez and all the ministers except brother Stoor, united in this wish, and begged him to reconsider his resolution.

In a few days it was reported in the neighborhood, that Mr. Norton wanted to decline the nomination, but his neighbors, without respect to party, were determined to vote for him whether he was a candidate or not.

Very soon afterward the "Star in the West" announced to the public that Edward Norton, Esquire, modestly wished to remain in private life, but the crisis was so urgent—the demand for men of high character and great talents was so great, that party differences were now happily laid as they should be—on the shelf, at least for this campaign, and all good men and true would cordially unite in his support. His name was, therefore, without his knowledge or consent, reinserted in the paper as a candidate for nomination.

The friends of Col. Hilts looked with great jealousy upon this movement. The party organ had gone over to Norton's interest. They had no choice left them but to apply to the newspaper of the opposite party, and the next week the "Weekly Tomahawk and Scalping Knife" came out with an article signed "Ajax," in which the writer distinctly stated, that, from his own personal knowledge the Editor of the "Star in the West" had been bribed by Norton, to support him, and that he had the evidence in his own hands, and would shew documents to any person who would call at the office of the "T. and S. K." and added, "More anon."

The "Weekly Tomahawk and Scalping Knife" was published in a village about twenty miles from that which was blessed with the light of "Star in the West," and the next day after the publication of the offensive article Jeptha Jothram rode over and sent a

committee of three of his personal and political friends to John Cassard Burton.

“Tell him,” said he, “that Jeptha Jothram is in town.”

The committee, headed by their foreman, Colonel John Barnes, ascended a flight of outside steps to the office of John Cassard Burton, and found him surrounded by a group of his political friends.

“We have come, sir, as a committee in behalf of our friend, to inform you that Jeptha Jothram is in town.”

“What did the old bloat come to this place for?” said John Cassard Burton.

“Don’t know,” said Colonel John Barnes, and the committee returned.

They went to the tavern which Jeptha Jothram patronized, and repeated the exact words of John Cassard Burton.

“I’ll make him know, before I leave this village, what I came here for. The fellow shall not assail my honor in its most tender and vital part with impunity. Please call on him again, and tell him that I am here to have his foul and libelous article retracted, or to have satisfaction.”

The committee retired, and again climbed up the steps to John Cassard Burton’s office.

“Mr. Jeptha Jothram says, sir, the offensive article against him in yesterday’s paper must be retracted.”

“It is true, every word of it, and the proofs are here in this office. As for satisfaction, the most satisfactory thing that he can do, will be to shut himself up all day in a dark room and contemplate his own virtues.”

The committee, headed by their foreman, withdrew

and delivered their message to Jeptha Jothram. But Jeptha had ridden several miles that morning, and was fatigued: of course he took a few glasses of hot whisky punch, and was too much intoxicated to send another message. He was put to bed, and his friends waited until he had slept off the effects of the whisky.

“Will it end in a duel?” they said, one to another, or will the editor, who had made so gross a charge, return to his senses and do justice to their injured friend?” In about an hour Jeptha Jothram awoke.

“Go over, gentlemen, and tell that libelous rascal that Jeptha Jothram is in town.”

“We have done so already, and he wants to know what you are here for.”

“Go over, gentlemen, and tell him that article must be retracted.”

“We have done so, sir, and he says he wont do it.”

“Go over, then, and tell him that I will have satisfaction.”

“We have done so, sir, and returned his answer to you before you went to sleep.”

“Go over then, gentlemen, and ask him in plain terms, if he will fight a duel with me?”

The committee retired again, and climbed the steps to John Cassard Burton's office.

“Jeptha Jothram, Esq., wishes to know if you will fight a duel with him?”

“No; times are too hard. It would cost at least ten cents to buy powder and ball enough to kill him, and I will not waste so much money on such an object.”

The committee returned, and reported to Jeptha Jothram.

“Go back once more, gentlemen, and tell the coward

that Jeptha Jothram is in town, and will stay here until he gets satisfaction."

The committee again climbed the stairs, and delivered the message.

"Tell him, gentlemen," said John Cassard Burton, "that there is but half a barrel of whisky in this town, and none to be had nearer than ten miles. He'll go as soon as that is drunk up."

The committee returned and delivered the message to Jeptha Jothram.

About an hour afterward a great uproar was heard in the village. Tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, tavern-keepers, men, women and children, all ran to the place where the uproar was loudest. Some persons at the other end of the village cried fire! fire! fire! Others shouted for water. Alarm bells were rung; dogs barked; cats mewed, and cows bellowed. Some, as they ran, said it was a tornado. Others said they felt the shock of an earthquake. But, when they reached the place—the middle of the public street—they found nearly all the men and women of the village formed into a ring, and in the center were Jeptha Jothram and John Cassard Burton fighting. They bit—they gouged—they scratched each other—they pulled each other's hair, and kicked, and rolled over and over in the dust. One party shouted for Burton—the other for Jothram. A large number of minor fights were going on at the same time. Men who wanted to see fair play pushed and pulled those who did not. At last Jeptha Jothram conquered his antagonist, and made him cry "enough." The parties were separated. The blood was wiped from their faces, and the dust from their clothes. John Cassard Burton's left eye was entirely closed and

black. Jeptha Jothram's nose, which, before the fight, was a lively red, was a dark, purple color, intermingled with large spots of greenish yellow, and twisted awry, and very much swollen. The original notes from which this account is taken, states that one Tom Giles, an old settler, who happened to be present, and who had lately joined the Baptist Church, said, "It were a great shame for two sich high larned gentlemen to be a fightin' like dogs," and proposed that they should drink friends. The whole crowd seconded the motion with a shout, and were all invited by Jeptha Jothram to the bar, who told the landlord to treat the whole company, and charge the bill to him. John Cassard Burton said that he did not write the offensive article. It was inserted by the foreman while he was out of town. He did not see it till the next day, and regretted its insertion. But his correspondent was an honorable man, and some circumstances which he communicated, gave at least a show of truth to the charge.

Jeptha Jothram explained the whole, and the next week the "Tomahawk and Scalping Knife" contained a long article, stating, in substance, that "a more thorough investigation of the charge had convinced the editor that injustice had unintentionally been done Jeptha Jothram, Esq., which he greatly regretted, and was happy to relieve him from the imputation. Mr. Jeptha Jothram, although wrong in his political opinions, was the soul of chivalry and honor. He was delighted to do justice to the character of an honorable political foe."

Mr. Strong was so greatly interested in this part of the narrative, that he borrowed a horse of the landlord, and rode over to the place where the combat occurred,

to collect, if he could, further particulars about the parties.

When he got there, he inquired of the landlord of the tavern at which he stopped, if he knew any man there who could give him any information of a gentleman named Jeptha Jothram.

The landlord looked earnestly at him, and taking him to the door, pointed to a one story frame building across the street. "Go into that tailor's shop, and you will find a gentleman there who knows him very well."

Mr. Strong went over to the shop, and found it occupied by only one man—an old, grey haired tailor, who was sitting at work on his bench. He stated his errand.

"Do I know the Honorable Jeptha Jothram? Yes, sir. Him and me has always been warm personal and political friends. On the day when the great fight took place between him and the editor of the Tory paper, that lived here then, and who had scandalized his karackter, for which he got well whipped, as he deserved to be; well, sir, as I was telling you, on that day he got his coat tore in the scrimmage, and come into my shop to get it mended. While he was here in this very shop, I had a new coat hanging up on that very peg that you see thar by the door, and Jeptha Jothram tried it on, and it fit him exactly. I made it for Peter Kelly's weddin' coat, and hung it up not half an hour before the great fight took place, and I told Mr. Jeptha Jothram so, and he says to me, "Malone, can't you get Peter Kelly to put off his wedding for another week, and let me take this coat, and you make him another?"

"I went over and saw Kelly and his intended, and

they agreed for to accommodate Mr. Jothram, bein' as he had just whipped a Tory editor, and Mr. Jothram took the coat. It was a nice fit, and one of the very best coats that ever went out of this or any other man's shop in this State. Mr. Jothram said he didn't care about the price, as I was so kind as to accommodate him, and that he would send the money over for it, with the money that he would send over to the landlord to pay his tavern bill. The money did not come as soon as I looked for it. Let me see," said the old man, getting off his shop board, and going to an old desk from which he took whole bundles of books, covered with pasteboard. "Ah, here's the original entry—let me see. It's more than thirty years ago. I've constantly carried the account into my new books, and now it 'mounts up to a pretty smart sum. But Mr. Jothram is an honorable man, and one of my best friends, and when he gets able he will pay me, and the landlord, too, every cent, principal and interest."

"He is yet living then?"

"Bless your heart, yes, sir. He's moved down to Mississippi, and is as lively as a kitten, only he's been subject to fits of *delirium tremens*, from a boy, which of course pulls him down some."

Upon more diligent enquiry, Mr. Strong learned that Jeptha is subject to fits of *delirium tremens*, and the effect on him is somewhat different from the effect of such fits upon some other editors. He does not see snakes, nor fiery flying dragons, nor great black dogs with flaming red eyes, as they do. In one of them Jeptha said, with his eyes dilated and glaring—"See, see, there, there, they are—a man and his wife, and three children—they're in a skiff on the Ohio

river. The woman hugs the baby to her breast and holds the other two by their clothes. It 's bright moon light—the water curls like snow wreaths by the side of the boat as it cuts its way. The man rows as if for life. There—I don 't see them now—they're in the shadow of that big sycamore tree on the other side of the river. There—there—the boat is out in the moon-light again. The man rows harder and faster, they reach the shore. They land and the skiff is adrift on the river. The man and his wife and the two oldest children kneel down and thank God. Now they raise their arms in the air and seem to be shouting. They are runaways—slaves. Help!—help!—Oh, help! Will no one stop them? Stop them! stop them! The Union is in danger! The Union SHALL be dissolved unless they are brought back." And he fell back with clenched hands—trembling in convulsions.

Jeptha, although not a member of any church, has "great respect for religion"—not indeed without discrimination, for that would imply a want of judgment.

A few years after the great church trials, brother Stoor became somewhat more eccentric, and preached doctrines which Jeptha said were incendiary and destructive to the peace and happiness of the state. Jeptha headed a mob that tarred and feathered him and ducked him in a horse-pond, and drove him in disgrace from the state.

But he listened with great pleasure to the sermons of the Reverend Jabez Clitters. They sat easily on his stomach as a bowl of chicken soup after a fit of *delirium*. They quieted his nerves and composed his whole system. After the death of the Reverend Jabez Clitters, he wrote a handsome eulogy on him half a column long,

and inserted it in his paper. Sister Martha Clitters cut it out and pasted it in her family Bible under the head "DEATHS."

Jeptha yet retains his love for the Clitters family. Jabez Clitters, Jr., D. D., and Hector Clitters are his favorite preachers. They maintain with unabated zeal the great principles of their father. They are saints and slaveholders.

Jeptha, when he is a little intoxicated, makes some queer speeches. He says:

"The government of the United States, sir, is in FORM a government of the people; but, in FACT, a government of newspaper editors. The editors, sir, are the figures, and the people are good, round, good looking ciphers—count well when in their proper position, but that's all, sir. You can tell any man's vote by the newspaper he takes just as well as by his ballot. The representatives in Congress are our representatives, sir, the representatives of the newspapers—not of the people."

Jeptha says he is an unflinching supporter of our Nation's rights—State rights—the people's rights—of all rights—but the rights of women and niggers.

Jeptha thinks that if laws should be passed to secure to every laborer an honest day's wages for an honest day's work—the country would be ruined. "He would rather," he says, "see it swallowed up by an earthquake, than that such 'incendiary' doctrines should prevail."

CHAPTER XXXV.

OUR readers have been already informed that Mr. Brandon purchased a small tract of land, adjoining that of Rashleigh's. As they were neighbors, Rashleigh, soon after his return from Europe, and Brandon, although both of them seemed to be half hermits, soon met, and were pleased with each other. Rashleigh called on Brandon and his family, and was surprised and delighted to find that his neighbors were cultivated and intelligent people.

He told his servants soon after he got home from a visit to Brandon, that the next day he expected company to dinner, and ordered the necessary preparations to be made.

It was an event in the family. A dinner party, and the preparations for it, reminded the servants of old times in England. Each was busy in his or her department. Old silver that had never been unpacked from the boxes in which it had been brought to America, was brought out and brightened. China and cut glass, which had been stored away in dark closets, were brought out into the sunlight. The cooks were busy. Old bottles, filled with sweet meats, and covered with dust and cobwebs, were unsealed, and their precious contents placed in suitable dishes for the dinner. But who were the visitors that were expected? Mr. Rashleigh had not told them, and they, of course, did not venture to inquire.

John Huskett thought it was not himpossible that the President of the United States had heard of Mr. Rashleigh, and was making a journey to call on him, or if that was not so, some distinguished hornithologist was out collecting Hamerican birds, worthless as they were, and would dine with Mr. Rashleigh, before he plunged into the wilderness, "as I 'ave done a thousand times," he said, "in Haustralia, and at the Cape of Good 'Ope, when I 'ad the onner to be naturalist for his grace, the Duke of Devonshire." Jinks thought it must be an Hinglishman, for Mr. Rashleigh, by this time, knew enough about the Hamericans, and would never dine with any of the blood-thirsty savages again.

All were greatly surprised when Mr. Rashleigh ordered the dinner to be ready by three o'clock, and said it was nct the custom in America to dine at a later hour.

"Hat three o'clock," said Susan. "Why, we can't light the wax candles at all, they will be done afore sunset, and who ever heard people dining afore sunset? They must be Hamericans, or he 'd never 'ave thought of sich a thing as that."

About three o'clock on the day appointed, four persons were seen approaching the house. An old man with white hair, and with a well brushed, but threadbare coat; a woman about thirty-two or thirty-three years old, tall, erect, and graceful in her carriage, and plainly dressed; and a girl of about eighteen, upon whose arm the old man leaned as he walked. The girl was not handsome; her forehead was low, and her teeth irregular; her stiff, brown hair seemed to defy all efforts to smoothe it. They were followed by a negro woman who walked closely behind them, and carried a

bag in her hand that looked like a schoolboy's satchel. Mr. Rashleigh met them at the door, and the servants were all astonished to find that these were the expected guests, for whom such extensive preparations had been made.

"Well," said Susan, "hif I 'ad known that was hall, I 'de 'ave saved myself a deal of trouble."

"Don't talk so girl," said Huskett, "no body but a fool would hexpect any thing else in Hamerica. We're not in Hold Hengland now, I can hassure you."

At the appointed hour dinner was announced, and Mr. Rashleigh conducted Mrs. Gilpin, while her grandfather leaned on the arm of Harriet Gilpin, as he went to the dining-room. The ladies seem to be surprised and annoyed by having white persons to wait on them, but, with that exception, nothing else seemed to excite their especial attention. Mr. Rashleigh's servants, as far as they could do so without being observed, carefully noticed all their conduct, and were surprised to find that people who were so plainly dressed and Hamericans, did not materially differ in their deportment from the ladies they had seen on similar occasions in England.

Mr. Rashleigh amused his guests by relating the invitation he had recently received to join a slave hunt, that, too, in behalf, he said, of a clergyman, and was no less amused to find that the invitation had been extended to his neighbors. "I felt indignant at first," he said, "that such a proposal should be made to me, but when the people went away, I laughed for half an hour at their conduct, and at their strange invitation. They really appeared to be sincere, and were, perhaps, offended that I refused to join such inhuman conduct."

“I, too, was offended,” said Brandon, “that they should have the impudence to ask me to take part in so low a business. It is very proper for some men to do these things, but improper for gentlemen.”

“Ah, I see,” said Mr. Rashleigh, smiling, “that while we agree in the result, we differ in the mode by which we reach our respective conclusions. You, I believe, are the owners of slaves. I have never felt myself at liberty to purchase any.”

“No, sir,” said Bradon, “I do not own slaves now. A few years ago I owned two hundred; but, by sad reverses of fortune, I am deprived of the greater part of my property. I think that the system of slaveholding is right. Under it we have more chivalrous and refined gentlemen and ladies, than can elsewhere be found in North America.”

“That may be true, sir,” said Mr. Rashleigh; “but are you sure, my dear, sir, that for the chivalry and refinement which, I have no doubt, exists, you are not indebted to other causes? In England, France, and Germany, and in every part of Europe, gentlemen may be met with who are as highly cultivated, and are as pleasant as any in the United States. I am glad that you have named this, because it seems to me, to be the only argument in favor of the system of slave-holding. If there be any force in it, it would seem to follow that the society in slave-holding countries must be better than that in heaven, as there is no slavery there.”

“Really, Mr. Rashleigh,” said Mrs. Gilpin, “you strike away at one blow our most cherished delusions. The argument that my father has just now urged, has always been the one on which my conscience has rested. I have thought that the test of good government is the

men that it produces, and a country that has, even in its infancy, produced such men as Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and others like them, can not be far wrong."

"Yes, madam; but you, perhaps, have overlooked the fact, that each of these men obtained his position and his fame, by his earnest struggles for freedom."

The hours passed pleasantly and swiftly away, and the little party broke up, happier, and better, and wiser, than they were before they met.

Rashleigh had lived long without society in America, and was delighted with his new neighbors. Conversing with them he soon forgot the petty troubles in which his ruder neighbors had sometimes involved him, and looked forward to years of happiness and peace. His visits became frequent to Brandon's. He went there so often, and passed so many hours under his roof, that his daily presence became almost a necessity to Mr. Brandon and to his family. "I can not do without you, Mr. Rashleigh," he would sometimes remark. "I feared, when I came here, that I had left behind all society, except my own family, and am glad to find one at least who is a gentleman, here in the wilderness."

But, they were alike only in one thing—both of them were educated gentlemen. Rashleigh was an ardent Republican from principle. Brandon hated it.

Rashleigh's views were directed, principally, to the dignity of man. Brandon's to the danger of giving influence to the uneducated white people; as for the negroes, he seemed never to have thought that they were human beings. "I like Virginia," he would say, "because a man must have some interest in the welfare of the State, and must be a freeholder before he can

vote. I do not like a government where the rabble who have neither property nor character, nor interest in the result, can combine under an artful demagogue, and control every election, take the government into their own hands, and make all who have a real interest in it, obey their caprices."

"You seem to have overlooked the fact, my dear sir," said Rashleigh, "that the man himself is of greater value than all the property in the State, and that the first object of all government should be to protect man in his rights."

"That may be so; but they are constantly abusing their power," said Brandon.

"Men do so every where, whether educated or uneducated, and in all forms of government," said Rashleigh. "They have been corrupt in all ages and in all parts of the world, and no change in the form of government or in the mode of administering it, or in the persons by whom it may be conducted, can alter that great fact in the condition of humanity. Your objection lies against the innate depravity of the heart of man. Education may smooth the surface, but it never has changed, and never can change, what lies deeply buried in the heart."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ONE day Corliss took down his rifle and started out to hunt. Some impulse, for which he could assign no cause, led him on and on to the west, away from the mountains and down into the settlement of the whites. It was a strange place to hunt. What game could be found there worthy of his rifle?

He was walking along a narrow path in deep thought—thought of his past life, and how sadly it had been wasted, when he almost ran against a man coming slowly toward him on horseback. and he stepped from the path, surprised that he had not seen the animal before. The rider too was half alarmed, and as much surprised, as he said, “I am sorry, sir, that I have been so careless. Indeed I was not observing which way I was riding.”

“Mr. Brandon said, Corliss.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Do you not know me?”

Brandon looked attentively at him. “I do know you. Begone, never let me see your face again.”

“These are high words, sir. But who has given you leave thus to address me.”

“Silence, knave,” said Brandon, trembling with rage, “silence, and begone.”

“Ah, these are great swelling words to be addressed by an old man to a hunter with a rifle in his hand.”

“Rifle!—your rifle!—you want to assassinate me. Do it at once, without another word from your foul

lips. I am here alone, and unarmed, an old man in the midst of dark woods; no eye but that of God rests upon us. Shoot," and turned his breast fully before him, and opening his vest, "shoot, my heart is here," laying his hand on his heart.

"Mr. Brandon, it is useless to talk so—you know that I am neither an assassin nor a coward. You are acting ungenerously, in thus reproaching me, when you know that we are not on equal terms. You can upbraid, when I, who have just cause to censure you, must be silent. This is neither generous nor just."

"I have not sought you," said Brandon, "nor followed you; you have thrust yourself before me. All that I ask is that you leave me at once and forever."

"I shall leave you now, sir, but make no promise for my future conduct. You are entitled to none. As for this meeting, it is an accident on my part. I did not know that you were out of Virginia."

They parted. Brandon rode slowly and sadly to his home, and Corliss wandered through the woods until the sun set, and then wearily and heavily returned to his hut.

"Father," said Mrs. Gilpin, as Brandon dismounted his horse, "are you sick? You are pale and feeble!"

"No, daughter, no. I am very weary. Tell Sam to put my horse in the field, and I will lie down and rest. He laid upon his bed, faint and sick, muttering incoherent words at night for a week, and then came out sadder and more feeble than they had ever seen him before.

Rashleigh's visits were too frequent, and his attentions to Mrs. Gilpin too marked to escape notice. He was no longer the dreaming enthusiast, poring over old

books, while the sun was shining brightly on fresh flowers, and the birds were all singing merrily. Life had now a new charm. His steps were brisker and his eye brighter, and his hand firmer than it had been before. He forgot his dreams, his theories, and his books, in the charming society of the young widow, who smiled, and laughed, and when — alone—wept.

“Father,” said Mrs. Gilpin, “do tell him all. Let us not compromise our honor by withholding any truth which it is right he should know. Tell him that I am not a widow; that so far as we know, my unworthy and depraved husband yet lives.

“I do not see the use, my daughter, of telling him things that may distress him, without materially altering your position. You have been married; you have no lawful husband now; your hand and your heart are both free to be bestowed at your own pleasure upon any object worthy of your choice. We have already had our full share of grief by the conduct of the man who once swore at the altar that he would live to make you happy. Why pour the bitterness of our own cup into another’s wine?”

“Yes, father, that may be true. Holy scripture and law both sanction my separation and divorce. I am free, thankfully free; but honor, a nice sense of propriety requires, in my judgment, that the gentleman who solicits my hand should accurately know my position.”

“My dear child, Mr. Rashleigh is an accomplished gentleman, and honorable as our house has always been, an alliance with him would at any time be desirable. Now it is —” He paused and did not finish the sentence.

"I know it; we have been rich, and are poor, and are now half dependent upon our relations, who, perhaps," said Mrs. Gilpin, with a sigh, "feel that we burden them. But, father, strong as the inducement may be to conceal the truth, is it not our duty, our duty," she repeated, with emphasis upon the word, "to tell him frankly—all."

"With all his good qualities and principles, my child, he has, as all men have, prejudices and caprices, which, for aught we know, may control his conduct even in important matters. He should know all, but it is better, in my judgment, that the full disclosures you speak of should be postponed until your happiness—our happiness, my child, shall be secured."

"It is for that very reason, father, that I am so anxious the matter shall be fully disclosed to him. His caprices and prejudices are part of himself, and affect his happiness. I fear that it is dishonorable to go on. If you are not willing to do so, I must do it and relieve my conscience."

"Martha, I shall not attempt to constrain you. You have always been controlled since your early childhood solely by your own views of propriety. But your father asks you to be cautious—to be cautious. You may in one moment draw darker clouds of sorrow around the setting sun of your father's life."

"Oh, father!" said Mrs. Gilpin, half sobbing, "what shall I do?"

"Say nothing more about it, neither to me or to any one else, until I have deliberated fully upon it, and then I will tell you the result. Leave the matter for a few days with me."

"I will, father."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Gilpin, as she rose from her seat, "that old predicted curse that has so long settled upon our house and blasted our fortunes, seems to follow us wherever we go."

"Nonsense, daughter. The old prediction was nothing but the dream of a crazy fanatic. Our misfortunes have proceeded from natural causes, and might have been averted if we had been wiser."

"Perhaps so, father, but whenever I think of it it makes me sad."

"Such things do always sadden even the best and wisest of men. I do not wonder that ladies, whose nerves have been shaken as often as yours have, my poor dear child, are full of sorrow when they think of them. They are the delusions of fear. God only knows the future."

"True, very true, father, but God can disclose the future through any agency he may choose to employ. Sometimes he does so by dreams, at other times, by impressions, more or less vivid; sometimes by signs, which half explain themselves and shadow forth the fact to be foretold, and sometimes by the mouths of persons, good or evil, who are generally themselves more than half unconscious that they are speaking out of themselves and of the spirit that moves them."

"Ah, child, I see that you have not forgotten the education which your good old Quaker aunt gave you. These doctrines are, however, peculiar to that sect."

"Oh, no, father, the Moravians, the Methodists, and indeed all Protestant Christians, in the lives of their eminently religious persons, indirectly or directly teach them. The truth compels them to do so."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"AND so," said Susan, "our master is going to be married, and to han Hamerican woman. Who could have believed that a gentlen.an, han Hinglish gentleman who has been hassociated with lords and ladies in Hingland, would 'ave come out here in the wild woods, and git married to han Hamerican woman."

"Child," said Thomas Jinks, "you know nothing at all about men. I knowed a gentleman in Hingland who had forty thousand pounds a year, and married his 'ouskeeper. When a man, forty years old, falls in love, there's no knowing what he will do—they're worse than an old widow falling in love with a young man."

"I've read," said Susan, "about that afore, Thomas; but it is strange our master should fancy sich a woman as that is, he is going marry. She is not 'ansome, and dresses so badly, and is very poor. He must be crazy. I declare I will not serve another day in this 'ouse after she comes into it."

"What will you do, Susan?"

"I've been talking to John Huskett about it, and we've made up hour minds to leave on the very day of the wedding, and go out and get a school, and teach the young Hamericans to talk Hinglish. John Huskett says he'll get a great college, and lecture on hornothology."

"Ah, well, child, you are well qualified for sich hemployment, and will make a vortune by it. If I can't get

along well, sure, I'll get a school too, and teach part of them the Hinglish language, and coach driving. I will make a vortune by it."

Mr. Rashleigh was still assiduous in his attentions to Mrs. Gilpin. A gentleman who has been accustomed in early life to the society of refined and well educated women, and is afterward placed in a position where he is deprived of such society, relishes it with keener zest, and enjoys it with higher appreciation, than others who have not been deprived of it. In the society of Mrs. Gilpin, Rashleigh thought of the days in England, when he was surrounded by ladies then young, and who were as refined and pleasant as she, and half sighed when he thought he had made himself half a hermit, and half a martyr for his political opinions. But now he had met with one in a republican country, who was as agreeable and refined as any that he had left, and he looked forward to a long life of happiness with her."

He was surprised to find that Mr. Brandon was not a Republican—at least in the sense in which he understood the term. When he came to America, he thought he would find in every man that he met with, full sympathy with his own feelings on that subject, and an intelligent appreciation of the theory of the government of the States of America.

Brandon believed that the American Revolution was right, and was grateful to the men who had suffered in the struggle, and brought it to a successful result. But always on the ground, that it is unfit for a gentleman to be taxed by men whom he had not elected, and employed to do so. "A gentleman," he said, "should be free, and suffer no man to touch his purse or his person without his consent—the one is robbery, the other

desecration. As for the lower classes of white people," he said, "as soon as they shall be qualified to discharge the duties of electors, no one, I am sure, will more cheerfully than myself, be willing to extend to them the right of suffrage, and even to place some of the more intelligent of them in offices of profit and honor. But these blessings," he continued, "as all others, must be won by their industry, intelligence and virtue. It is dangerous to trust the whole of our government, and, therefore, any part of that whole in the hands of persons incompetent to administer it."

"Do you not think," said Rashleigh, "that the right of suffrage is a shield to protect men from oppression?"

"It is both a shield and a sword. They can not wield the sword in their blindness without hazard to their friends and the state. They do not need the shield, because those who are elected have no interest in oppressing them, and honor, and conscience alike forbid them to do so."

"Alas, sir," said Rashleigh, "honor and conscience in all ages, and among all nations, have always proved too feeble to protect a defenseless class from the aggressions of those in power. All history teaches this lesson."

"European history may teach it; but, I assure you, sir, it is different in America."

"No, sir," said Rashleigh, "the heart of man is every where the same, and is always 'Prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward.'"

The preparations for the wedding went on rapidly. The day was near at hand, and yet Brandon had not disclosed the exact position of his family to Rashleigh.

He did not withhold it from any purpose to deceive him, but the subject was disagreeable, and he, therefore, rather from infirmity of purpose, than any other cause, postponed it.

"Ah!" said Norton, after his return from an electioneering tour, "that Englishman is yet in the neighborhood with his retinue of servants?"

"Yes, sir," said Tom Giles, to whom his remark was addressed, "Yes, sir, he's thar yet, and I suppose he means to stay thar, for he's gwine to get married?"

"Married! to whom?"

"To that young widow woman what is with the new comer, Mr. Brandon—she's his darter, I believe."

"Are you not mistaken? Can it be possible?"

"No; it's as sure as shootin'. They are fixin' things for the weddin' this blessed day. It will come off day arter to-morrow. It would have been all over afore this, only both of 'em wants a 'Piscopal preacher to marry 'em, and have sent way off to get one. They can't put up with a Methodist or Baptist like other people."

"Well, we'll see whether it ever comes off or not. I have learned a thing or two, and you know when the boys wanted to tar and feather the aristocrat, last winter, I said, 'leave it to me.' They did so, and now they'll see that I am on their side and worthy of their votes."

"What's in the wind, captain?" said Tom Giles.

"You shall know, neighbor, in due time, but not now. If the boys here don't have more fun than they've ever had, I'm mistaken for once in my life—that's all. Are you sure that it is Brandon's daughter he is to marry—and not the grand daughter?"

"Captain, it is the widow, as sure as shootin'."

"The widow, eh? well, we'll see, neighbor Giles. Keep dark, or you'll spoil the fun."

"You may trust that 'eer to me, Captain. Tom Giles knows when he ought to speak and when he ought to keep his mouth shut."

"Neighbor Giles, take this silver dollar, and go out early to-morrow morning with your rifle. If you see a deer, of course you will shoot it and hang it up on a tree until you come back. Then, if in the course of your travels you happen to fall in with any of the Indians, ask for a man named Corliss, a white man, and if you do happen to see him, give my respects to him and tell him that Mr. Norton would like to see him. Take notice that I don't send you for him; but if that man is not at my house by to-morrow night we'll have no fun."

"Very well, Captain, Tom Giles understands you—trust it to him."

"And, Tom Giles, do not drop a hint to any man, woman, or child, white, black, or Indian, about this wedding; if you do, you will spoil the greatest piece of fun that we have ever had west of the Cumberland mountains."

"Trust that to me, Captain—Tom Giles is no fool."

Early the next day Giles took down his rifle and wandered out. In a few hours he was near the Cherokee encampment, and met one of the Indians.

"Good day, neighbor," said Giles—"glad to see you."

"Augh!" said the Indian, "me no glad see white man, out here with rifle. You no right kill deer here."

"I've killed no deer and don't want to. Do you know a white man named Corliss."

"Yes, we, long time ago, call him 'big drunk'"—Good man now—Grey Eagle marry his daughter—he rich man now—very poor when he come here five, six years ago. Rich man now—live in a hut close by Grey Eagle, and his little grand-son play there all day long. Go there—you find him easy."

"Thank you, neighbor, good mornin'."

"Augh!" said the Indian, and left him.

Giles found Corliss at the place, and told him that Norton wished to see him before sunset.

"What does he want with me? I don't know him and never saw him."

"I can't tell," said Giles, "but I believe it's mighty particular business; and if you don't go, you'll rue it as long as you live."

"Grey Eagle is not here, and I have the charge of his business, while he is away. I do not see how I can go there."

"Well, you may be sure it's mighty particular business, or else I would never have come so fur to tell you."

While they were talking, Grey Eagle's little son, about four years old, ran up to his grandfather. "Come, Willie," said the old man, taking him on his knee, sing one of your fine songs to our neighbor here, who has come to see us."

The child sang a little scotch song, lisping the words as he did so, and his grandfather patted him on his cheek, and told him he was a good boy.

The child ran to the outstretched arms of Tom Giles and leaped upon his knee.

“What’s your name, my little man?” said Giles.

“Willie.”

“Whar’s your mother?”

“She’s in her cabin making me a new cap, and putting feathers in it that will hang down so, (drawing his hand down the back of his head) and look so pretty. There’s three red ones and two white ones; and it’s most done.”

Giles looked earnestly at the boy and rose to go away.

“Shall I tell him you’ll be thar, Mr. Corliss?”

“Yes, I’ll go, though I do not know what he wants with me. It may be business of importance, as he is a candidate for the legislature.

Before sunset Corliss rode upon an Indian pony to Norton’s house. It was the first time for five, six, or seven years, that he had entered a white man’s dwelling, and he sighed as he did so, and thought sadly of other and perhaps better days.

Other thoughts, too, crowded into his mind as he looked at the window shaded by the cinnamon rose bush, near the porch, and as his eye hastily glanced at the little room it shaded.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

AFTER a calm, sweet day, the servants of Brandon, neatly dressed, the women with their heads tied up in kerchiefs that resembled turbans, all gathered into the little parlor, and stood in the corners of the room. The servants of Rashleigh, the men dressed in heavy, black coats of broadcloth, and the women in garments better suited to mid-winter than to summer, came in, and were quietly seated in chairs made of unpainted wood, and seated with hides, with the hair on. All was still, and in a few minutes the clergyman appeared, with a prayer-book in his hand, and then came out the bridegroom and bride, accompanied by the father and daughter."

At the words, "If any man hath aught to say, why this man and this woman shall not be united in the holy bonds of matrimony, let him speak now," A man entered the door, and said, "I have this to say—The woman is my wife,"—and loud shouts were heard from a multitude of people out of doors.

"Your wife?" said the clergyman.

"Yes, sir, my lawfully wedded wife, and that girl," pointing to the daughter, "is my child!"

Rashleigh looked at Mrs. Gilpin, who stood, still holding his hand, trembling and pale, and silent, and then at her father

Brandon was embarrassed and silent. The servants were all standing with a few neighbors, who had been invited to witness the ceremony, around the parties.

"How is this?" said Rashleigh, after a pause.

Brandon tried to speak, but could not. Mrs. Gilpin then said: "He was my husband, but he abandoned me, and became the companion of a negro slave, and the father of four of her children. I obtained a divorce from him for that cause."

"It is false," said Corliss. "She is not divorced, but my own lawfully wedded wife. Let her show the record, if she has such, and that will settle the matter at once."

"That can easily be done," said Brandon. "I have a copy of it in my desk, and will produce it immediately."

He went for it, and returned pale and trembling. "It is gone," he said—"it is gone!"

"It never was there. Go on with the ceremony, if you dare, sir," he said, addressing the clergyman, "go on at your peril." He left the house, and other shouts of derision, louder than before, accompanied with whoops and yells, followed each other in rapid succession, until the voices could no longer be heard.

The servants of Mr. Rashleigh quickly withdrew, and went to their home. Those of Mr. Brandon lingered, until a gesture from Mrs. Gilpin bade them leave.

The neighbors expressed their regret at the unreasonable interruption, and their confidence that all would be rightly explained in a few days, and then they would see the parties happily married.

Mr. Brandon was pale and trembling. Rashleigh was polite and cold. He listened indeed to the explanation of Brandon and Mrs. Gilpin, but made no remark. There was an air of offended dignity upon his brow, and a cold haughtiness in his manner.

After half an hour he invited the clergyman to accompany him, and bowed to Mrs. Gilpin, to her daughter, and to Mr. Brandon. They left the house—left it filled with sorrow and gloom.

“Oh, father,” said Mrs. Gilpin, as soon as they went away. “Oh, my dear father, why did you not tell Mr. Rashleigh the whole truth?”

“My daughter, I really intended to do so, but put it off from time to time, until the preparation for the wedding caused me to overlook it.”

“I have no doubt, father, of your good intentions; but I would long ago have told him all, if you had permitted me to do so.”

“I am sorry, my dear child. I alone am to blame, and am the cause of your grief and misfortune, but I meant no wrong.”

“I am sure you did not, father.”

“Do not be grieved, my child. We have the license, and the clergyman is yet in the neighborhood. The copy of the record has, perhaps, been mislaid. I can not find it, but it will, I hope, be found to-morrow.”

“Why do you think so? Have you ever taken it out of your desk since we moved here?”

“No, Martha. It was carefully wrapped up and labelled on the outside. I saw it but a week ago.”

“No one ever sees the inside of your desk, father, but yourself. How, then, can it be misplaced?”

“There must have been some foul-play in this transaction. Every paper, and all the little stock of bank notes, and gold that I have in the desk, are just as they were yesterday when I opened it. This paper only is gone.”

Mrs. Gilpin leaned her head on her father’s shoulder,

and sobbed, "Oh, father! that curse—that heavy, heavy curse—that has settled on our house, has followed us here, and will go with us to the verge of our graves."

"It would seem so, Martha. I fear it is so. All things work together for our evil."

"Yes, father, God is against us, and let us do as we may, man can not help us."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE next day was passed in diligently searching for the copy of the record. All were engaged in the search, and every place was examined: it could not be found. True, another copy could be procured, but the record was in Virginia, and it would take perhaps a month to get it, and the mails too were irregular, and the document was too valuable now to hazard any uncertain conveyance.

After an evening's deliberation with his family, Brandon determined to go to Virginia for another copy. His honor and that of his family had been assailed; his own veracity was disputed. He lay under grievous imputations of foul wrong, and he determined at once to relieve himself from their pressure. Old and feeble as he was, and ill-able to bear the expense of such a journey, and unwilling to leave his daughter and grand-daughter with no other protection than the slaves about his place, he made preparations for his immediate departure.

Another day came and they received no call, no message, no note from Mr. Rashleigh. On the third day, Brandon took his cane and walked over to Rashleigh's. He was politely, but coldly received.

"I have come, sir," he said, with some embarrassment, "to talk over this matter with you."

"Have you the alleged document? Mr. Brandon."

"No, sir. We have diligently searched for it, and can not find it. It must have been stolen."

"Perhaps so, sir. Have you any thing more to tell me than you and Mrs. Gilpin have already told me?"

"No, sir, except to add, that my daughter, a month ago, urged me to tell you her exact situation. I intended to do so, but put it off from day to day, until the hurry of preparation for the wedding drove it from my mind."

"That is very unfortunate, sir. I really wish you had done so, or what would have been better, that Mrs. Gilpin had told me. It would have saved me much mortification and unhappiness."

"The fault is solely mine," said Brandon, "or rather the misfortune."

"You burden yourself with an undue share of guilt," said Rashleigh. As for the misfortune, as you call it, I think that I am the deepest sufferer. I frankly told Mrs. Gilpin, before I solicited her hand, every thing that could possibly interest her respecting myself, my family, my fortune, my habits, and my hopes. I felt myself bound in conscience to do so. I was even more explicit and more careful than I would have been in England, if I had there solicited the hand of a lady, because there much in the history of families is accessible to the parties, and is presumed to be known, that can not readily be had here, unless from the parties themselves."

Brandon sighed. "I assure you, sir, the case is as I have stated it, and I shall start on a journey to Virginia this very day for another copy of the record. I will return in two or three weeks."

"And what then?" said Rashleigh."

"I will show it to you if you wish to see it."

"I do not know what my wishes may be when you shall have returned, sir. At present I am quite careless about it, and I hope you will not encounter any such journey for the purpose of gratifying my curiosity."

"I will do it," said Brandon, "to remove the seeming impediment to your marriage with my daughter."

"That would be giving yourself much trouble for no valuable purpose. You say that Mrs. Gilpin is divorced. I have no reason to discredit your statement."

"Yes, sir, she is divorced."

"Yes," said Rashleigh, apparently speaking to himself, shaking his head as he did so, "she is divorced—divorced—divorced. The wretch who was her husband, and who abandoned her for a negress, by whom he had a brood of mullato children, yet lives. I have seen him, and heard him—claims her as his wife."

Brandon sighed. "I see, Mr. Rashleigh, how greatly I have erred, and am very sorry for the wrongs I have brought upon you and my daughter. But I will go to Virginia and get another copy of the record in question, and if you wish to see it you shall do so, if it be only to relieve myself from charges that the wretch has made against me."

"I assure you it is wholly useless to take such a journey for my sake. The record, if produced, would only prove what I am too well assured of now—that Mrs. Gilpin is a divorced woman—not a widow."

Brandon returned to his home and told his daughter and grand-daughter all that had been said by Rashleigh and himself. We will draw a veil over their sorrows. We could not describe them if we would.

“ Oh, father ! ” said Mrs. Gilpin, as she retired to rest, “ how can we get rid of the curse that so long—so long—without a day of intermission, has pursued us, like the avenging angel of God. That old prophecy of evil to our house, is true—too true.

“ My child, God is merciful, and there is forgiveness with him. He does visit the sins of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation ; but he shows mercy to thousands of those that love him and keep his commandments. Let us look to HIM for forgiveness for the past and help for the future. He can bring good out of evil and light out of darkness. Let us look humbly to HIM.

CHAPTER XL.

ON the afternoon of the same day, Brandon, with a heavy heart, started on horseback on his long and weary journey to Virginia. He left his farm in the care of his daughter and the slaves. The hope of his speedy return, and the value of his mission, relieved their hearts of a large share of the grief which his absence would otherwise have caused them.

Soon after he crossed the Roanoak, he dismounted, and kissed the soil of his native State, and said, "The Old Dominion, God bless her forever."

When he got to his native county, kind friends greeted him, and welcomed his return. After a few days of rest, he prepared to start to his own home; but new difficulties awaited him. Many years before he had, at the request of a neighbor, an old friend, become his surety in an executor's bond for the faithful discharge of his duties to some minor heirs. He had forgotten the matter; but his friend was now dead, and it was alleged that he had squandered the money of his wards. A suit was brought against Brandon as surety, and he was arrested and imprisoned for the debt. The old man meekly yielded to his fate, and could but think, as he entered the gloomy walls of the prison, of the curse which his daughter had so often said clung to the family wherever they went. He sent the copy of the record to his daughter by mail, with a letter in which he stated his arrest, and that he was assured, by

his lawyer, that he would be detained but a few days, and would then, of course, return.

He could, indeed, have made an assignment of his property, and been relieved at once. But he believed that the demand was unjust, and had too much confidence in the integrity of his deceased friend, for whom he was surety, to think, for a moment, that he had appropriated the estate of his wards to his own use. He, therefore, determined to contest the demand. After a short delay in prison, he was released from its walls, but detained within the prison limits. The boundaries extended his walks a square or two around the jail. He could not pass over these limits as it would render his own sureties liable for the alleged debt.

In two weeks Mrs. Gilpin received the record and the letter, and its contents renewed and deepened their sadness. Their little farm, the greater part of which was yet a forest, afforded them a scanty support. His lawyers, he said, told him that he should be present at the trial in which the whole remnant of his property was involved, but he could not state when the case would be decided. A burden which Mrs. Gilpin had never borne, now fell upon her—the care of the farm, and the maintenance of the family, and she summoned all her energies to discharge her new duties.

A young man, who was about to keep school in the neighborhood, applied to her for boarding. At first she was surprised that such an application should be made; but, after she had deliberated for a day or two, she consented, and Paul Hunter modestly seated himself at their table. He was about twenty-five years

old, with brown hair and blue eyes, quiet, retiring and modest, well educated, and still a diligent student, and courteous and kind to all. He came from the State of New York, and intended to return as soon as he could earn money enough, as teacher, to discharge a debt he had incurred at college. He came in the evening after walking two miles from the school-house, and went to his room and his studies as soon as his supper was over, and showed no disposition to be other than a boarder for a short time in the family.

The greater part of the neighbors were strangers to them, and all laughed at their calamity, and looked upon Mrs. Gilpin as an imposter. And then, too, their father, in his old age, wearied with his long journey, and feeble in health, was in jail for a debt, the payment of which would take all his property. Mrs. Gilpin had purchased and paid for all the slaves on the place, by means of a legacy in the will of a distant relation. But the farm was her father's. It was his all, and if that was sold, they would be without a home. The effort to appear cheerful was abandoned, and the mother and daughter yielded to the pressure of the tide of sorrow. Mr. Rashleigh knew nothing of their misfortune. They had not seen him since the sad day which had been appointed for the marriage. Another and another letter came from their father, as week after week rolled heavily away; but each letter was less cheerful than the one received before it, and the confidence of Brandon's speedy release and return, was less firmly expressed.

After a few days the increased security which they felt from Paul Hunter's presence, and the many little attentions which he so cheerfully paid them,

his pleasant manners, and intelligent conversation, made him a welcome guest. His attentions increased as their reserve wore off, and after awhile he went less early to his room, and his studies, and sat with them in the evening in cheerful conversation on the porch.

CHAPTER XLI.

MR. BRANDON found greater difficulties and more delays in his lawsuit than at first he expected. The accounts of his deceased friend were complicated, and had been badly kept, and the eminent counsel he had employed to aid him were so much engaged in other cases, that it appeared to him they had but little time to attend to his. Weeks and months passed away. The court sat, and the parties not being ready, the trial was postponed for several months. He became sad and impatient. It seemed, too, that the heirs of the estate, who were originally interested, had assigned their claim to some unknown person who was mercilessly endeavoring to make as large a profit as possible from the transaction.

His letters became less frequent and more sad. The old friends who were always glad to see him, and sympathized with him, could not stay within the prison limits—their homes were in the country; and after short conversations, they had to leave him. The people in the village were not those with whom, in the days of his prosperity he had been accustomed to associate. Their tastes and manners were different from his. He walked silently every fair day from his humble boarding house to the limits within which he was restrained, and gazed at the blue sky and the distant fields, and woods beyond them, and then went slowly back. He had been rich, and now was poor and

dependent. Poverty stared him in the face. He could have borne it without a murmur if he only was the sufferer. But his daughter and grand-daughter, what would become of them? They could not labor. They knew no useful employment, and had always been taught, taught by himself, that labor is degrading.

"And who," he said, "is the unknown claimant in this action? Who is so hardly pressing it and endeavoring by all means in his power to extort from me the last dollar that I have for the maintenance of myself and my family—to take my last acre of land and turn me and mine homeless and penniless, in old age, upon the world?"

He had accused his overseer of injustice and fraud, and quarrelled with him many years before, and with that exception he had passed through life in peace with all men. But the overseer, although he had become comparatively rich, had moved out of the State, he knew not where, and he had heard that he was dead. He, therefore, could not be the person who had raked up this old claim and was suing in the name of others for it.

His letters from home were full of grief, but also assured him that his family were getting along very well, much better than they would have dared to hope, before necessity made it their duty to exert themselves for their support. All the clamor that had been raised in the neighborhood against Mrs. Gilpin had subsided, and seemed, so far as they could judge, to be forgotten. But not one of them made any allusion to Rashleigh. It was plain that he had not resumed his visits to Brandon's house. If he ever intended to do so, he surely would now when the hearts of all the family were filled with grief.

Brandon knew Corliss had left the State a year before his daughter's petition for divorce had been presented to the court, and by some process of law he had notice of it. He now learned that the only notice was by means of an advertisement in a newspaper which Corliss probably had never seen or heard of. This increased his grief, because he knew, from the obstinate character of Corliss, he would assert his claims without intermission so long as he believed he was sustained by the law. His clothing needed replenishing, and his little stock of money was slowly ebbing away. His friends knew him too well to offer him assistance, unless he should first invite their aid, and the hope of repaying them was so dull that he would not venture to borrow. He sat day by day in his little chamber, with both hands on the top of his cane, and leaned his head upon them, and thought of the present, of the future, and of the past—sometimes of the old prophecy that troubled his daughter, but which he, till recently, heard with a smile.

Can man foretell the future? No. But can God make man his agent to foretell it? Yes. He has done so, and can do so again if he will. But if calamity come on his house by the will of God, acting indeed through natural agencies, are there no means to turn away his displeasure? Will he not forgive? Yes. And he looked up with hope.

CHAPTER XLII.

WHEN Paul Hunter left his home in the State of New York, he determined that wherever his lot should be cast, in any of the Southern States, he would devote himself to his business as teacher and to self-improvement, and avoid all society as far as he, with propriety, could do so. He was going there only to make a little money more readily than he could at home, and would then gladly return to his native State. Why should he then form attachments which, of course, would result in nothing more than the diversion of his time from more important pursuits? When he did think of marrying at all, his thoughts were always associated with a black eyed little cousin, who laughed at him, and romped with him, and with others, but he had never fallen in love with her, and of course, had never said a word to her that would imply that he had done so.

His purpose was still fixed, but he could not see that he would depart from it in the least, if he sat with the ladies on the porch, and cheered them as far as he could by his conversation. His studies—was he not tired by the labors of the day? And was it not injurious to his nervous system, and to his eyes, to pursue them by the light of a lamp? He would retire early to rest, and go on with them in the morning, before the family were awake, and while his mind was clear and fresh. He did so for a few days, and found the change of great service. When the clock struck nine, he rose and bade

the ladies good night. But very soon the clock struck when he was in the midst of conversation, which was too charming to be suddenly broken off, and very soon he did not hear it strike at all. The clock still ticked in its place on the mantle-piece, and Paul Hunter wondered why he did not hear it. The family soon became as early risers as himself, and after a little while Paul found breakfast waiting for him. He received a letter from his sister, informing him that the bright eyed girl, of whom he so often thought, was married, and had started on a bridal tour to Europe. He read the letter with a sigh, and put it in his trunk. That dream was over.

The ladies were delighted with him. At first he was but a schoolmaster of good morals, from New York, and recommended to the attention of those whom he might meet with by letters, from a well known and highly honorable gentleman of that State.

Now, they found that humble as his position seemed to be, he was a gentleman, modest and retiring, even bashful, well educated, and refined in his manners. They learned that he was related to some of the ancient families in his native State, whose names are historical. His blood was as honorable and as gentle as that of the best families in Virginia. He did not seem to care for it; his pedigree, he said, was of little importance. His conduct would unmake or make him.

It seemed, too, that his parents, and many of his relations were rich, but that he would not call upon his father for aid, and determined to support himself.

When Paul Hunter first took up his school, he remained in the school-house after it was dismissed, preparing for the duties of the next day, and sometimes

reading from some book which he kept in his desk, and would then slowly loiter home, stopping from time to time to look at the beautiful plumage of some bird that flitted before him from tree to tree, or to examine some plant or flower, or shrub, which he had never seen in his native State. But now he kept no book for private reading in his desk, and saw neither birds, nor shrubs, nor trees, nor flowers, with which he was not already acquainted, and hurried home with rapid pace as soon as school was dismissed.

At first, too, they sat in the evenings on the porch, and all took part in the conversation. The labors of the day had been exercise enough for the health of each, and they were glad to sit, and talk, and rest, when these labors were over. But Paul Hunter thought that his walk each day of two miles to the school, and two miles back was not enough, and he proposed to walk not far, indeed, nor fast, but to walk with Miss Hatty a little while before they retired to rest. Miss Hatty loved to look up at the trembling dewy stars, now shining in glorious brightness, now hidden by fast flying clouds, and to hear the whippoorwill and the mocking bird, and to breathe the fresh air as it came from the mountains. Why should she not walk? The first walks were short. They came back, and sat again on the porch, and talked with Mrs. Gilpin as before. But each evening the walks were extended, at least, in duration, and Mrs. Gilpin, whose heart was still as young as that of her daughter, sat on the porch, sat long and late, waiting their return.

When Paul Hunter left his home, he supposed, as all young men do, that his neighbors, and the society, especially the female society of his own State, were greatly

superior in intelligence and refinement, and all that adds to the natural charms of woman, to that in any other State in the Union. Were they not better educated? Had they not access to more books? Had not many of them traveled over half of the earth, and seen the best society both of Europe and America? But he found a charm in the quiet, gentle manners of Mrs. Gilpin and her daughter, which he had never seen before. They were intelligent, but made no display of their learning. He discovered it only after he became well acquainted with them, and then he had to reflect how much they knew, and how only by accident, apparently, they disclosed their knowledge. There was something—he could not tell what it was—so soft, so gentle, so refined in their manners, that won upon his heart. He saw them, too, in the best position in which they could have been placed. Long years of deep grief, quietly endured, had shed its hallowing influence upon their hearts, and as the evening dew fills the white cup of the lily, and causes it to send forth sweeter perfume, so their sorrow spread an odor of sweetness and sanctity around them.

“There are exceptions to all rules,” said Paul Hunter, as late one evening he went to his chamber. “I fully determined, when I came to the south, to avoid the society of ladies as much as I could politely, and to guard my heart so well, that no emotion like love should enter it for a moment, but I never dreamed that I should meet with so charming a lady as Harriet Gilpin. I could be happy forever with her. Can I be happy without her?”

He sat by the open window, and looked up at the clear, blue sky, studded with brilliant stars, and at the

moon reposing upon a silver cloud; the soft wind bore on its wings, sweet odors from shrubs and flowers, and cooled his brow. He sighed, and was thoughtful and sad.

Ah! Paul Hunter, did you not tell your mother and sister, and all the girls that were at the large party, at your father's house, the evening before you left it, that there was no danger—not the least in the world, that you would fall in love with any young lady in the south? And did you not bow to a bevy of laughing girls, and say, as you did so, that it was utterly impossible that you could, for a moment, forget the attractions of the ladies of your native State? Retire to rest, Paul Hunter, and sleep off, if you can, the day dream that fills your heart with pleasure, and may control your life.

Paul had reached—had passed the point in the onward and deepening march of his affection, at which he could conceal his passion, either from himself or from others. He was not ashamed of it, and was proud of its object. But Harriet seemed to have become alarmed, and declined his invitations to take their accustomed evening walk. She sat near her mother on the porch, and gave no opportunity for such private conversation as he had, but a few days before, so passionately enjoyed. He could not endure the torture of suspense. Although his lips had never said so, he knew that a thousand protestations on his part, could not have more fully informed her of his love, than his conduct had already done. Why now did she shun all opportunities for an open declaration?

One evening, as they were sitting on the porch, the conversation was constrained, and flagged, and at last

stopped. Paul's large, blue eyes gazed out on vacancy, while the unheeded wind lifted his light auburn hair, and let it fall, as it murmured past them. Paul rose and invited Hatty to walk with him, in a tone so firm and so different from any that he had ever addressed to her before, that while she trembled at the sound of his voice, she could not refuse. They walked on in silence, each afraid to speak until they reached the limit they had usually set to their promenade, and turned to retrace their steps. They still came on silently toward the house, and had nearly reached it, when Paul, with Hatty's arm in his, stopped. He was still silent. He tried to speak, but his words were incoherent—his ideas seemed confused.

"I know it all, Mr. Hunter," said Harriet, "and it is useless to say more about it. You need not ask if I love you. You already know it. Let us be frank with each other, and then we will both relieve our hearts, and be happy friends. I love you too well to marry you. You have a bright future before you, which it would be sinful to overcloud with the sorrows of our house. Your path through life will, I have no doubt, be one of honor, and usefulness, and renown; but it will defeat your high destiny if your fate is blended with mine. Forget, then, I beseech you, the passion of the present hour, and the girl who has unconsciously inspired it, and be useful and happy!"

Paul was stunned. "What do you mean, Hatty? Do you love me, and reject me?"

"Yes, I do—do love you, and I must reject you, because I love you. If my heart was less sincere, I would gladly accept your hand; but I can not ruin you. You are the only gentleman whom I have ever loved or will

love. I must tell you now what, perhaps, I should have told you before, that a deep and abiding curse rests upon our house, and has brooded over it for nearly a century. Prosperity has bidden us a long farewell!

“Look at that large oak that stands behind our humble dwelling. When we came here it was green, and full of life and beauty. Now its top is dead. The trees all wither and die that overshadow our dwelling as if a pestilence smote them.”

“But, Harriet, I will share your sorrows and misfortunes, and the burden will be lessened when divided.”

“No, Paul. All who have intermarried with our family, as well as its direct descendants, have withered beneath that curse. It came from God; and human nature—no matter how strong it may be at the outset, will at last give way, and you will sink as all others have gone down one by one beneath its dreadful power. I love you, and will not destroy you.

“Mother has consented to tell you the whole story, at least, as much of it as will interest you, and when you shall have heard it from her, you will pity us; but do not—do not—forget us. We will always love you, and in a few years more when you will have won the fame which, I am sure, awaits you, we will read of you always with sad pleasure. Do not forget us, Paul. We will be poor, and sad, and unknown, except by a few, while your brow will be crowned with honor, and your house filled with wealth, your life with usefulness, and your hours will all be happy. But don’t forget us then, Paul. Think even then, I ask you, of the humble girl who loved you too well to tear those laurels from your brow, and this wealth from your hands.”

“It is useless to talk so, Harriet. I can never be happy without you. A home not gladdened by your smiles, and honors in which you have no share, and wealth that can not be divided with you, would be but the mockery of despair. I care not for the old prophecy you allude to. Energy, industry, perseverance, and a determined will, will control events, and conquer adversity. Place your hand in mine, and I will have nerves of steel, and can conquer devils.

“What is this old prophecy to which you so often allude, and that now rises up, and stands between me and my happiness. The dream of some fanatic, no doubt, who has mentioned events, which would have occurred, if he had never been born, and their apparent fulfilment has led some persons to believe that the rest is true.”

“He mentioned no specific events. He only laid down a principle, and told us that our family is controlled by it. My mother will relate it to you this evening.”

CHAPTER XLIII.

"MOTHER," said Harriet, as they entered the porch, "Mr. Hunter wants to hear you tell that old prophecy that has so often been referred to in our conversation."

"It is late, Hatty, but if you will seat yourself here on the porch, I will tell it as far as I can remember it. I often heard it from my mother when I was a little girl; she told it to me with tears, and it made a deep impression upon me."

"The house they lived in, she said, was a two story frame building, with bushes all round it—built in a fine grove of forest trees—in the northern part of Fairfax county, Virginia."

"My mother was then a little girl—I suppose not more than seven or eight years old—her name was Mary. It occurred before the Revolutionary War."

"My grand-father was a well educated English gentleman, who had come over to America and purchased a large plantation, and had many slaves. He was a man of great public spirit, and took a warm and active interest in all the public affairs of the then colony of Virginia."

"I shall not attempt to relate it in the very words of my mother, but will do so in a manner that I think will best convey to you the impressions on my own mind."

They were seated in the porch, and Mrs. Gilpin began: "Mary, (that is my mother,) ran into the house and

said, 'Oh, mama! there is such a queer looking gentleman coming up the avenue. He has on a round coat, and such a broad hat; his shoes are covered all over with dust, and he has a great long cane in his hand.'

"He is probably a Quaker," said her mother.

"I do'nt know; he looks like a good man; he has such a sweet, pleasant face."

Mary was looking out of the window.

"Mother, he has stopped now by your large white rose bush. He has put his cane under his arm, and is looking at the roses. He is coming along now. He has stopped again, mother, and is watching the humming birds that are flying in great numbers around the honeysuckle. He is coming up the avenue now, and will soon be here, mother."

"I believe James Marklan lives here."

"Yes, sir. Please take a seat, sir. He is out at the plantation. I will send a servant for him."

"I thank thee. I will wait till he comes in."

Mr. Marklan came.

"Mr. Woodman, I am delighted to see you. Helen, my dear, Mr. Woodman was my schoolmate, and has at all times been one of my dearest friends.

"Our supper will soon be on the table, Mr. Woodman. You are tired and hungry, I have no doubt. We will do all that we can to show you how cordial our welcome is."

"Thank thee, James. I have no doubt of thy kind purposes, but I must decline thy invitation to break bread with thee."

"Why, Mr. Woodman, will you not stay one night at least, with us? It is growing dark, and our nearest neighbor lives two miles from us."

"I thank thee, but feel it a duty to decline thy proffered hospitality. If thou hast a few minutes leisure, James, I will be glad to have a brief conversation with thee."

"Certainly, sir, certainly. Walk into another room."

"I would prefer a walk in the yard, under some of the fine trees that surround thy mansion."

They walked down the avenue until they came to the gate, through which Mr. Woodman had entered an hour before, and there, under the shade of a large cherry tree, they stopped. Mr. Marklan was silent. Mr. Woodman stood silent for a minute, and then said: "James, I have a burden on my mind on thy account; it has weighed heavily upon me for several days."

"What is it, Mr. Woodman? I trust that nothing has occurred that has diminished your regard for me?"

"My regard for thee, James, is greater to day than it has ever been, and I hope will never diminish in the least. Thou art the same man that thou hast been ever since I have known thee. My concern, is, that thou holdest in slavery a great many poor blacks who are children of thy FATHER and my FATHER, of thy GOD and my GOD."

"Yes, Mr. Woodman, I have by purchase nearly a hundred slaves, and have many also which I obtained by my wife. I treat them well. I give them good food and clothing, and do not overtask them. I do trust that you have not heard from any person charges of cruelty against me."

"I have heard nothing to thy prejudice from any person. So far as I know, all men speak well of thee. But, James, the burden on my mind is, that thou holdest in slavery the children of our God. As slaves, thou

deprivest them of their free agency, and placest them on a level with the beasts that perish. Thou art not doing unto them as thou wouldest have them do unto thee."

"True, Mr. Woodman, I am holding my people as slaves. The whole country—every body who has the means for doing so, are holding slaves. All the Christians in the colonies hold slaves. I can demonstrate that it is right to do so."

"I have no commission to argue with thee. My duty is to warn thee, that the path in which thou art treading leads to utter ruin. That duty is now discharged.

"Come, sir, let us return to the house."

"No, thank thee. I feel it my duty to call to-night on thy neighbor."

"Mrs. Marklan will be greatly surprised, indeed, if you do not take tea with her. She is expecting you."

"I have not leave to do so. Farewell, James."

They parted. Mr. Woodman had mounted the stile for the purpose of passing out of the yard, when he stopped—stood still for a moment—and then descended rapidly, put his cane under his arm, and called to Mr. Marklan, "James—James."

Mr. Marklan stopped. "Ah, sir, I am glad you have changed your purpose, and will take tea and stay all night with us."

"It is not that, James, for which I have returned. But my mind is not yet at rest. It has been given to me to say to thee:

"'He that will save his life shall lose it, and he that will lose his life for my sake and for the gospel's, shall find it.'

"This is a moral principle as firmly fixed in the Government of our Heavenly Father, as the laws by which

the planets are controlled in their orbits ; and in mercy to man HE has revealed it to us through the Scriptures of truth. If thou wilt now emancipate thy slaves, and labor with all thy talents for the emancipation of the slaves in this colony—if thou wilt devote thy life to this cause—thou wilt be a benefactor to thy race—and thy memory will be blessed upon the earth. Before the beginning of the next century, all the slaves in this colony will be free—God will bless thy labors and fill thy barns with plenty, and crown thy days with honor. Thou hast talents and education and influence among men—devote them to the cause of the poor and the needy—relieve the oppressed. But, James, if thou dost not do it. REMEMBER—‘ He that will save his life shall lose it.’ Farewell, James.”

“ But, Mr. Woodman, let us reason together.”

“ I have no commission to reason with thee. The whole matter is now between the and thy Maker. James, Farewell. I shall never see thy face again in this life.”

“ Good night, Mr. Woodman. I am very sorry that you can not remain longer with us, so that we might talk this matter over more leisurely. Mr. Woodman had passed the stile, and was out of hearing before Mr. Marklan had completed his sentence.

Mr. Marklan returned to his house, and was sad and thoughtful. Late in the evening, as Mrs. Marklan and himself were sitting out on the porch listening to the whippoorwill and the mocking birds in the garden and shrubbery that surrounded their fine mansion, and enjoying the cool evening breeze, Mrs. Marklan said :

“ What did that Quaker gentleman want with you, James? He appears to be a very good man. His fine

face is radiant with love and gentleness, and his manners are very quiet and refined."

"My dear, he came—PROPHET from GOD."

"A Prophet! Mr. Marklan you surprise me. The days of prophecy are over: the volume of Revelation has long since been closed. Prophecies and miracles ceased soon after the death of our Redeemer."

"I know that is the current opinion, and but few persons dare to assert that prophets exist now, but I think that, in all ages and perhaps among all nations, God has raised up for himself Prophets among the people, who have made known his will. They have not been acknowledged as such while they were living, and were denouncing the sins the people most cherished; but, after they were gone from this life and the events they foretold had taken place, then the people honored their names, and garnished their sepulchres."

"What did he do or say to you that has caused you to be so sad?"

"He went with me, my dear Helen, down to the large cherry tree near the stile, and then taking my hand gently in his own, he pressed it warmly, as his hot tears fell upon it, and told me that I am living in open sin while I hold the children of God as slaves."

"You surprise me. Who ever heard that it is a sin to hold slaves? The best people on earth, everywhere, in all the colonies, and in the mother country, and in the West Indies, hold slaves, and no one doubts that it is right to do so."

"I doubt it, my dear Helen, and more than doubt it. I am convinced it is wrong."

"Why, Mr. Marklan, you surprise me. Only one

month since, you laid out four hundred and fifty pounds at Alexandria, in the purchase of twelve negroes just from Guinea; and now, after less than half an hour's conversation with that strange odd looking man, your opinions are changed. What course of reasoning did the Quaker pursue by which you are so speedily convinced?"

"He did not reason at all, my dear Helen. He warned."

"Who is he, that he shall warn and threaten a gentleman, and on his own plantation too?"

"He is an humble and faithful minister of Christ, my dear wife, without education or property or fame, who speaks as the Spirit of God within him moves him to speak."

"You not only surprise me, you alarm me. Do you, who have graduated at Oxford, and with no mean honors, do you believe there can be any foundation for the pretensions of that peculiar sect, and that God has given exclusively to them the gift of prophecy?"

"No, my dear wife. I do not believe that he has given anything exclusively to them, but that in all sects among Catholics and Protestants, and perhaps, also, in some rare instances, even among the heathen, he has given to those who will mind the things of the Spirit—revelations of his will. This affords a plain and easy solution to many phenomena of mind, generally supposed to be incomprehensible, such as dreams that come true, impressions of coming events; thinking of persons before you see them, and meeting with them soon afterward. Thinking of persons, of whom, perhaps, you have neither heard nor thought for years, and soon after receiving a

letter, the first you ever received from them. The Quaker solution—the Scripture solution—that it is the Spirit of God in man, by which he is enlightened, makes it all simple and plain. Upon any other theory it is all a tangled maze in which philosophy loses herself. That sect has brought to light in these times one great truth—a truth, however, which has existed in all ages, and has been frequently declared for centuries."

"What do you intend to do? I do hope you will not dream even of following the counsels of this wild and dreamy fanatic."

"I intend to consult with you first. It is due to you, as my wife, that I do so."

"That is strange, indeed, that you should consult with me, or with any being on earth, when you think you are commanded by God, himself, through this Quaker, to pursue a particular line of conduct. But as you wish to know my views, I certainly will not withhold them; and I do think that your own wife, the companion of your youth, the sharer of all your fortunes in life, deserves as well to have her opinions respected, as the opinions of a foolish Quaker, who has intruded himself, unbidden, under our roof. My spirit is as good as his spirit: I am as well educated as he is. I have read the Bible as well as Mr. Woodman. I regard it as highly as he does. Now my opinion is, that a more wild, and visionary, and reckless folly never entered into any man's brain before. It would utterly ruin all these fine colonies to adopt it. The country is as yet nearly unsettled. All these great forests, even as far west as the Alleghany mountains, must be cut down, and plantations

made where great forest trees now grow. Who is to do all this hard work, if not the slaves? There are but few persons to be hired as servants here, as you well know. The land is so easily obtained from Lord Fairfax at two shillings and six pence an acre, that the persons who in England are servants, are landholders here, and labor only for themselves.

“But it is still worse in your case. *You*—you alone are asked to emancipate all your slaves. Who will till your land? Who will labor for me?—I, who have never been accustomed to work; and it is too late to learn now. Our girls, too, will soon come into womanhood. Even if the thing should be done at all, this is not the time to do it. It will be time enough to think about it when our family are settled in life.

“As for the negroes, it would actually ruin them. More than half of them are from Guinea, and can not speak so as to be intelligible to strangers. Do you not see how unreasonable the man is? His message can not be from God; for God is the most reasonable being in his universe.”

“I fear, my dear Helen, that I have erred in consulting with flesh and blood—in listening to any arguments, even if they fall from angel lips.”

“Thank you. Such compliments remind me of the days of your courtship.”

“My dear wife, I am serious and sad, and perplexed. Do you not remember the text, in which it is distinctly declared that ‘God will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation?’”

“I certainly do, and I remember too that all our best

theologians assert that that principle has been abolished under the Gospel dispensation. It was a rule for the Jews."

"I am not sure, my dear, that it has been abolished. The children and grand children of drunkards and spendthrifts suffer now as greatly, perhaps, as the same class of persons did under the Jewish dispensation. The fact exists now, and I can not see that the rule from which it results does not exist. It is a dreadful thought, one that makes me shudder, that our descendants for a hundred years to come, who may be pure and good and kind as mortals can be, may suffer—deeply suffer, in consequence of the results to which we may arrive in our present conference. On the other hand, it is pleasant to think that the results of our conference to-night may descend in blessings upon our children for ages after our very names shall be forgotten upon earth.

"As I walked up the avenue I did so with a full and as I thought a fixed purpose to call up all my slaves on the plantation and tell them they are free—to do so before I slept, and then as early as possible to-morrow morning to make out the necessary legal papers, and after that to present myself to my friends as a candidate for the House of Burgesses and to labor in that body for the freedom of the slaves in this colony. I feel assured that the measure, if earnestly pressed now, will be successful, and that it will be the greatest blessing I can confer on my adopted country. I feel it my duty to do it."

"Your duties will not change or be lightened if you will reflect upon them. Do nothing rashly."

James Marklan rose early the next day, not quite at
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ease, but the vivid impression which was upon his mind the evening before, had become dull. He put it off another—and another day—till at last he smiled at the delusion—as he called it—that a good and an honest, but mistaken man had caused.

“I am sure,” continued Mrs. Gilpin, “that I am not superstitious. I am not a believer in wizards or witches, or even in fairies or giants. Nor do I place greater reliance upon dreams than people generally do; but, still, from the first moment I heard of that prophecy when I was but a child, I have not been able to shake the dreary impression it made upon me, from my mind. There is something about it that makes it stick.

“My grandfather, as I have told you, was an opulent and well educated gentleman. He was honored and esteemed by all who knew him. His mansion was of course, the seat of hospitality, and the first men in the colony were often his guests. He had a beautiful sister who came over on a visit from England, with whom, I have often heard my mother say, Colonel Washington was greatly pleased; so much so, that he sometimes rode fifty miles in one day to pass the evening in her society under my grandfather’s roof. But something, I know not what, soon after this sad prophecy, diverted his attention to another lady whom he soon afterward married.

“I do believe that if my grandfather had set his slaves free, and had been a candidate for the house of Burgesses, with his heart burning with the wish to emancipate all the slaves in Virginia, he would have succeeded in his effort to do so, and would have lived to an honorable old age.

"But, not long after that, the Revolutionary war broke out, and my grandfather took a decided stand with the Colonists. He became an officer, and fell at the beginning of the war, in the first battle that he was in, and at the very beginning of the battle.

"His father was still living in England, and was so greatly exasperated by the part his son took in the cause, that when he first heard it, he altered his will, and disinherited him and his family. This left to my grandmother only the plantation and negroes in Virginia. She was unskilled in business, and the embarrassed state of affairs, caused by the Revolutionary war then going on, reduced her means so greatly, as to make her poor.

"She had but one son, who, afterward, became a Quaker, and is the father of my hopeful cousin, Tom Gilbert, now, I have heard, a slave auctioneer in Charleston—and two daughters—one of them, my aunt Martha, also married an officer who was killed in battle near the end of the war. I am the only child of my mother, and I married a man whose family and fortunes were good, and—you know the rest.

"Whether ever any misfortune happens to us, I can not but think of that old—old prophecy. Whether it was the dream of a fanatic, or the message of God, I do not know. But this I do know, that it seems to have been most signally fulfilled. Misfortunes have followed—each so closely upon the heels of its predecessor—that before the shadow of the one has left us, the lowering front of the other is frowning in our faces.

"I have prayed to God, most earnestly, to remove this curse—to stay his chastening hand, and grant us a little of the sunshine of prosperity; but I have

never felt that in this thing my prayers would be answered. I do not know what to do, or which way to turn. On every side I see nothing but gloom and thick darkness. Nothing behind me but the ground wet with our tears—with tears of blood.

“This is the prophecy, Mr. Hunter, and so far—it has been fulfilled. I am glad Hatty has mentioned it to you. If she had not, I would have done so as a duty. The truth must not be concealed.”

CHAPTER XLIV.

IT is now time that we should revisit the mountains, and see after Huldah; Minna, and Isham and their child.

Contrary to the predictions of old Isham, his little son began to get well. The swelling of his mouth and nose rapidly went down.

"Ah!" said old Isham, "I see how it is. The child got no blood on its teeth. It's the narrowest escape from death I ever met with in all my practice."

They remained a few days only at the hut, to which they at first fled, and returned to the cave. Isham was compelled to do so, to obtain food for his family, as his position at the hut was too far from the negroes to enable them to visit him, and return in a single night.

The part of the cave which they occupied now, was so far from that in which they had been discovered, that they thought themselves safe. No one could approach it without being heard long before he reached it, and the means of hiding were so great, that it would be almost impossible to take them.

It was a long and narrow room, around which rocks were piled in great and irregular masses. The rock above them was not much higher than their heads when they stood upright, and many small openings in the sides of this irregularly shaped apartment, led into other and deeper recesses of the cave.

Here, with a small fire of light wood, built at the side and under an aperture which let the smoke escape, Minna sat all day long with her child by her side, sewing—for she could sew although she was blind—and humming to her child some hymn she had been accustomed to sing.

On a great, grey rock, old Isham placed a burning lamp, made of the shell of a large turtle, and filled with the fat of such animals as the negroes brought to him. The red light from the fire and the lamp cast a lurid glare around the cave, and threw all the shadows into grotesque and unearthly shapes.

One day soon after they were established in their new hiding place, Minna heard Isham approaching—“Dis way—dis way—now you ken walk straight.”

“Ah, Huldah, I knows that is you by your walk,” said Minna. “Come in and set down on this rock by me, and tell me how you is to-day.”

“Thank you, Aunt Minna, I am well.”

“When you was at the hut the other day, you telled me you had bin to England and forin parts.”

“Yes, Aunt Minna, we have been, and I wish we had stayed there too. Oh! I am so sorry that we ever came back to America.”

“Why so, child, don’t you like your own country better than any other?”

“No, Aunt Minna. I like all the countries on this earth better than my native land; because in all other countries we are treated better than we are here. Wherever I have been I was free. Here I and my child—you and your child—are slaves.”

“No slaves whar you ’se been?”

“No, not one. I traveled all over the country from

England to Rome, and I saw not one slave in my whole journey. Every body is free."

"But they's mighty poor and oppressed—ain't they?"

"Yes; many—very many—of them are poor, poorer than any persons—except the slaves—in America. Some of them have no bread, and are clothed in rags, and they are oppressed too, but not with such oppression as you and I endure. Their children are their own, and no man, not even the king, can seize and take them away from their parents. No man dare do so. They are poor, but free. In England, and Ireland, and Scotland, every man's house—no matter how poor that man may be—is his castle. One of their great men has said: 'The winds may whistle round it, and the lightnings of heaven may enter it, but the king dare not cross the threshold of the door.' In other countries, too, in Europe, the people are oppressed. In Italy, Spain, and Portugal, they have laws which forbid the common people from reading the Bible. But in this country—in half of the United States—we have also laws which forbid the colored people from learning to read the Bible, or any other book. And what makes the matter still worse is, that the very people who sustain such laws, denounce the Catholics for doing the same thing."

"Oh! what blessed countries them must be, Hul-dah! whar a mother don't have to hide in rocks and caves, to keep a preacher from taring her own chile from her."

"Compared with the slave States in America, they are blessed. There is no country on the face of the earth, Aunt Minna—not even among the heathen,

where men worship dumb idols instead of God—where there is so much, and such deep oppression of the poor and needy, as in the slaveholding States of America. My child is not safe for one hour. Your child is safe only as you conceal it from its so called owner. Oh, Aunt Minna, it is dreadful for a mother to feel, every day of her life, that before sunset her child—her only child—may be torn from her arms and sold, where she may never see or hear from it again. And thousands and tens of thousands of mothers live in this very condition all over the slaveholding States."

"Oh! it is heart breaking, Huldah. What's we to do?"

"Do?" said Huldah, with great energy. "We may fly to the free States, if we can; but when we get there, we may be seized and brought back into greater suffering than we endured before we fled. So long as we are in the United States—no matter in what caves we may hide, or what mountains we may climb, or to what places we may flee, we are always in danger of being dragged back to the power of our masters to submit to them as slaves."

"Oh!" said Minna, "it is terrible; but what ken we do?"

"Do—do nothing but *die*. The heaven above us is brass, and the earth beneath us iron. Whenever we stretch out our hands for help, we grope only thick darkness. No one hears our cry! No one heeds our sorrows!"

"God hears them, Huldah. Why don't he help us?"

"I don't know. It appears strange. He is good, I am sure; but I don't know why he see's all things, and does not come down and help us."

"I know how it is," said Isham, "one man hurts you, and another man gives you medicine that cures you; you get sick, and will die without a doctor to come and give you something to cure you."

"Yes," said Huldah, "that does seem to be the way that things are done in this life. By man comes our miseries, and from God, through man, our relief. But, Oh! uncle Isham, it is so long in coming!"

"Yes," said Minna, "but whar you're mighty sick, you're slow in getting well."

Huldah often visited the cave, to which she had access by an entrance near the Indian encampment. She spent whole days cheering Minna in her solitude, condoling with her grief and giving her as far as she could—hope.

Their days became more and more perilous. Some of the slaves who came at night to Isham, told him that Norton was making great preparation for another hunt, and had sworn a bitter oath that he would have Huldah and her child living or dead.

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CHAPTER XLV.

THE Reverend Jabez Clitters was full of zeal in the cause of the whites. "Is it not," he said, "theft and robbery to take away people's property—goods, chattels, and effects from them, and without their leave or license having been first had and obtained? And is not the receiver as bad and as guilty and as wicked as the thief himself? And have not these Indians received MY property which was stolen, aye, robbed from me—even that child. They are, then, but a den of thieves and robbers, and as such, and for that reason the den should be broken up and destroyed. The cause is a just and righteous one, and I do not see or perceive how any good and honest man—especially a Christian man—can withhold his aid and succor from us. Nevertheless I judge not—'to his own master he standeth or falleth.'"

"Very right, sir," said Norton. "We have your influence in our cause—but your example, sir, will be of great service to us—come over and help us. Your presence in the field will do us more good than a dozen of your valuable sermons. In the Revolutionary war, you know, sir, clergymen left their pulpits and shoulered their muskets, and you also know the happy effect of their example upon the troops."

"I do know it, Mr. Norton—my spirit is indeed with you—as you may assure all our friends—but at present

I am writing a book on 'Sanctification,' and have no time to spare."

"Lay aside your book, sir, for the present, and show, by your own example, that your practice agrees with your principles. What cause can be better than that of breaking up a nest of thieves and robbers?"

"None, Mr. Norton—none. I will go with you. On such occasions a chaplain should always accompany the righteous party."

"I never thought of that before, Mr. Clitters. It really does seem to me now that you have mentioned it—that every slave hunt should be accompanied by a pro-slavery minister as chaplain for the party. Can not your denomination furnish ministers enough for all such occasions?"

"Believe me, Mr. Norton," said Jabez, "our denomination in these southern states can furnish ministers enough for the service you mention—but 'Who goeth a warfare at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof?'"

"Yes, sir, they should be paid for their labor in proportion to its value. In this case, sir, you are working for yourself as well as for me."

Oh, Mr. Norton, I do not mean or intend to say or to insinuate that I shall be paid for accompanying you, I only lay down and state a general principle which should be observed and followed. Some of our younger ministering brethren are poorer than I am, and for their benefit I call your careful notice and attention to it."

"Yes, sir, that is right enough. You will join us, then?"

"Yes," said Jabez, "I will lend and give the people

the aid and assistance of my influence and example, and personal presence in this just and righteous cause."

The Reverend Jabez Clitters joined the party, but did not mingle with the men who were engaged in it. He sat alone—with his arms crossed upon his breast and his legs stretched out before him apparently in deep meditation. Some of the men were so hardened that in his absence they jested about his ears; and it seems not a little strange that at this time Bill McClintick was first heard to utter the foul slander that afterward cast such a deep shadow over the Reverend Jabez Clitters' life. At first, it is true, he intended it only as a jest, but afterward, during four or five years, from time to time, he repeated it so seriously that many people believed it to be true. Indeed, at one time the belief became so general that the congregations of the Reverend Jabez were greatly diminished in consequence of it.

"Who," said the people, "will go to hear a CALF thief preach. He had better pay for the CALF, or restore it to its true owner, before he does so."

The next day after Jabez came among the crowd of white men who were engaged in the war, a boy ran in great haste—"Mr. Clitters—Mr. Clitters, if you'll go right quick, you 'll catch old Isham with that child of yours. I just saw him carrying it off in his arms."

Jabez rose—and four men followed him. He walked in great haste, guided by the boy who gave him the information, until he came to the steep side of the mountain and saw old Isham ascending a mountain on the other side of the ravine. Jabez called to him stop—stop. thief. Old Isham ran. Jabez redoubled his speed and gained rapidly upon him. He outstripped

the men who started with him. Isham ran more than a mile—but he was burdened with a load in his arms, and Jabez was lean and light.

Isham, at last, finding that he could not escape, turned about and faced his pursuer. The object in his arms was wrapped up in an old brown dress, so that its face and whole person was concealed.

“This is *mine*, sarr—and you’ve got not a bit of right to it—and shan’t have it without you’re stronger than me.”

“It is *MY* property and goods and chattels,” said Jabez, quite fiercely, “and you are a thief for stealing it, and robbing me of it”—and as he said so, he seized it by the legs—old Isham pulled it—Jabez held fast—Let go, said Isham—you’ll straw it, and then it won’t be of no use to you nor to me—let go, I tell you. But Jabez would not let go. He held it by the legs—while Isham held it firmly by the waist.

“Do you let go,” said Jabez, “or I’ll pull its life out.”

“You can’t do that, sarr—that’s more nor you or any preacher in this world can do.”

Jabez bent forward, tightened his grasp, and made a sudden jerk with his whole force. In an instant he stood erect with his mouth and eyes wide open—it had been torn in two—and out gushed—not its heart and bowels—but a bundle of straw.

“See—see—said Jabez, with a deep groan, the depravity and corruption of the heart of man—especially in niggers.”

“You strawed my child,” said Isham—you had no right to do so.”

“Sinner!” said Jabez, “*this* is your child—this thing made of old clothes stuffed with straw is yours,

because you made it and fashioned it. But if it had been the one that is clothed with flesh and blood, and has a soul—that is mine. That makes the difference.

It's none of yours no more than this one is, sarr."

Jabez Clitters and Isham were nearly two miles north-east from that entrance to the cave which was on the west side of the mountain. While they were there, Minna and her child, accompanied by three Indians, went out from the cave at another entrance on the north side of the mountain, which was nearly a mile from that on the west side, and was unknown to the whites. Isham had adopted this plan to divert the attention of the whites from them and to aid their escape. He contrived to be seen by the white boy who gave Jabez Clitters notice of his attempt to escape.

Every pass in the mountain but one was closely guarded by parties of white men, so that it seemed to be impossible to escape from the cave. The place not guarded was so steep and dangerous that no one could get over it except by daylight. The Indians knew it, two of them went before as spies, and another carried the child and conducted Minna along it. Two Indian ponies were concealed in a deep ravine, not far from the place of descent. Minna was put upon one of them, the other (the black pony of Huldah) was mounted by one of the Indians, who took the child before him in his arms and started off at a rapid pace for another hiding place. The pony on which Minna rode followed the other without her guidance. Isham soon joined them, and guided by an Indian, they went by easy journeys to the everglades of Florida. Here Isham retired from his profession of doctor and cultivated a small piece of land which yielded enough to supply the humble wants of his family.

CHAPTER XLVI.

HULDAH availed herself of an invitation given by Mr. Rashleigh to herself and her husband to come and find an asylum in his house at any time they should need concealment, and was with her child secretly conveyed, at midnight, to his dwelling. Here they were concealed and safe.

The alarm turned out to be groundless, or at least premature, and after a week Huldah and her child returned to her husband's camp.

"Let me go," she said, to him—before she went to Rashleigh's—"to your mother, and stay there until I can in some way get out of this country. I can not breathe its air; it stifles me. My child will be torn from my arms and made a slave."

"No—no. Grey Eagle has skulked and hidden his wife and child long enough. He will do so no more. His fathers, for a thousand years, have been chiefs of their tribe, and always scorned to fly from any foe. This land is mine. The foot of the white man shall not pollute my soil, nor shall he tear my wife and child from my arms. It does not become Grey Eagle to fly from any foe. He will not fly from men who on his own soil are trying to tear from him all that he loves on earth. No—no. I'll summon all my tribe and fight till I die, before I'll step back another inch."

Huldah clasped him in her arms. "My brave husband, I'll die by your side. Let us face the whites

and fight them even if they stand a thousand to one against us."

Grey Eagle issued his orders and his scattered warriors gathered in arms to his camp. Norton heard the notes of preparation and was glad when he heard them. Ah, a war will arouse the patriotism of the people, and they will vote for the man who leads them to victory.

The Reverend Jabez Clitters said:

"Our meeting house leaks much and badly, and wants a new covering and roof, and if we get that child now it will be of great service. We can then erect and build a new meeting house and place of worship with the funds and money its sale will produce and yield."

The "Star in the West," through its editor, Jeptha Jothram, and the "Tomahawk and Scalping Knife," were both for war. "War to the knife," said Jothram, "against the savages, who are stealing our property."

"War," said John Cassard Burton, "is an evil—a great evil—that should be avoided—but when it becomes necessary, as in this case it is—it should be prosecuted with vigor for the sake of the peace that victory will secure."

The next numbers of these papers were filled with statements of outrages by the Indians. The settlers, they said, were flying from their homes pursued by the ruthless savages, with uplifted tomahawks, waging an indiscriminate warfare upon men, and women, and children. There was no safety but in resistance, or what was worse, in flight. The country had too long suffered from their outrages—and it was now high time that the people should stand and defend themselves.

The whole country was soon in a state of great excitement. Rumors of massacres by the Indians had been spread far and wide, and people who for years had slept in peace were now fearful when they went to bed that before daylight their dwellings would be in flames and their wives and children murdered with savage cruelty.

It was said that a large number of slaves had fled from their masters to the Indians, and were making a common cause with them.

Things could not remain long in this position. It was supposed by all that they were on the verge of another Indian war. In a few days an Indian was shot by a white man. Reprisals were made, and two or three white men were shot by the Indians.

It was said that white men from Georgia were pressing behind the Indians and driving them into the mountains. At last the war broke out. Grey Eagle led his forces to battle, and was foremost in every conflict. His voice was heard above the rattling of musketry, and the loud din of war, urging his men on:

“Be strong, men. Be strong. We will make them fly like rabbits before us.”

At the first onset the Indians drove back the whites, and slept near the battle field.

But this hasty gathering of his forces soon left them without food. Their stores were burned by the whites in many places and were wholly insufficient.

A council was called and they determined to sue for peace if it could be had upon honorable terms.

“What do you want from us that you already have not?” said Grey Eagle to Norton, who represented the whites. “You have our lands—you have driven the

deer away from us so that we are deprived of food. Even the fish have left our waters since you have settled among us."

"Go tell your chiefs that we want the surrender of every fugitive slave among you."

"Surrender my wife, my child. Never—while the great Spirit lives."

"You have other runaway negroes harbored among you. A child, the property of that good man, Reverend Jabez Clitters, you know is concealed somewhere on the Indian lands. Surrender it and make a treaty with us to surrender all slaves who may come among you.

Grey Eagle's eyes flashed with savage ferocity. He stood erect at his full height before Norton. "Hear me. I am a chief standing in council—and the Great Spirit always stands by the side of the Indian in council, and hears every word he speaks. I have told you, that I will not surrender my own wife and my own child into slavery for the sake of peace. Am I a DOG, that you ask me, as chief, to surrender another man's child when I scorn to surrender my own? Who is Grey Eagle, that you should come to him, as a chief, with the wampum of peace in your hand and words of insult from your lips? The man is poor and has come on my ground to be protected from oppression. If I turn my back upon him and refuse to hear, the Great Spirit will scorn me, when I call upon him in the day of my distress? No, no. The skeletons of my Fathers who have been buried for a thousand years, would all rise up and gather around me and hiss through their bony mouths, if their son made himself such a DOG. "Make a treaty that I will not

feed the hungry—clothe the naked—help the oppressed! Go ask the WHITE man to do so. I will die in battle and be buried in a swamp before I 'll do it."

"Very well," said Norton, "you may do so. We have no other terms to offer."

The conference broke up and the truce ended.

"I will fight them with my own tribe as long as they will stand by me, and if they leave me I will fight the whole host with my single arm. Surrender my wife—my child! No, never, while the blue sky bends above me and the waters flow at my feet. Grey Eagle will die, but he will not be a DOG."

The whites surrounded the small and comparatively feeble band of Indians and confined them to the mountains. Food failed them, except the roots and bark of trees, and the very little game and fish that their scanty space afforded.

CHAPTER XLVII.

MR. RASHLEIGH's house was visited so seldom by any of the neighbors; and himself and his family went so little abroad, that it was supposed Huldah and her child could be concealed there until the danger of immediate recapture should be past.

But Mr. Rashleigh was soon undeceived. Huldah had not been there a week before some men were seen loitering about the house, by day and at night. When any of the servants walked toward these persons they generally went away. At one time, however, one of the men enquired of Thomas Jinks whether Grey Eagle ever came there. This betrayed the object of these spies, and Huldah and her child were removed the next night to the cave. She was at Mr. Rashleigh's about a week.

While she was there the Indians were less vigilant in guarding the cave, and some of the white people entered and made, as they supposed, thorough examination of it. As they did not find any of the fugitives, they supposed that all of them had been removed to a safer place. The efforts to recapture them relaxed, and many of the white people went to their homes. Norton, however, kept up the hunt. While it was going on the election took place, and he was chosen to represent the people of — county. He was, all parties said, so patriotic a gentleman, that all political

differences should be laid aside to secure his services to the State.

Jeptha Jothram became quite interested in Norton's welfare, so much so, that he not only visited him very often, but brought his whole family over and took up his abode for a time with him. Mr. Norton was, of course, delighted, and—before the election—Mrs. Kite was delighted with Mrs. Jothram, but very soon *after* that was over, her ardor cooled so fast and so far that she said she wondered how cousin Ned could endure such society; for her part she had been so much accustomed to better that it was quite trying to her sensibility to encounter it—but, she added—honors are not won without condescension.

It seems that Mrs. Polly Giles went over to Rashleigh's to borrow something, while Huldah was there, and saw her. Of course so important a fact could not be concealed, and very soon after her visit the system of espionage began.

On the night she was removed Tom Giles happened to be passing very late through the woods. He saw, he said, two Indians on horseback and a woman on another horse. One of the Indians carried something before him which Giles thought was a child. They were too far from him and the night was too dark for him to see who they were; but he said he knew they were Indians by the way they sat on their horses.

"She is in the cave now," said Norton, "and if we will make one more bold and united effort, we can capture her."

A company of white men was soon collected. The Reverend Jabez Clitters again laid aside his work on "Sanctification," and went to the hunt.

Very soon after Huldah went to Rashleigh's, Grey Eagle and Corliss went to a distant place for food for the part of the tribe that was gathered in and about the cave, and for reinforcements. They were still absent when Huldah returned. He intended, when he returned with food and reinforcements, to make his final stand and fight the whites till he died or conquered.

About one hundred yards south of that entrance, which was on the west side of the mountain, there was a deep ravine, along which ran a small stream of water. About a mile, up this ravine, where the hill was more gentle in its descent, an arch could at times be seen, about six feet high and four feet wide, in a solid limestone rock. This arch was concealed at other times by the Indians, who placed piles of brushwood over it.

After having entered at this place, the visitor went in about fifty yards and suddenly entered one of the most magnificent apartments ever formed by nature—more gorgeous than the palace of an eastern king. It was about four hundred yards long, from east to west, and about one hundred yards wide. The dome was so lofty that it looked like a great white sky, and great stalactites stood all around the hall from the dome to the floor, like Corinthian columns.

Huldah divided among the Indians the little store of food which Grey Eagle had securely placed for her use, and cheered them with hope for two days after her return. Still neither Corliss nor Grey Eagle came. She sent messengers to hasten them. Two of these messengers were taken prisoners, and the third came back saying that all the passes were so closely guarded by the whites, that it was impossible to get away. He

said further that he met a man who told him the whites intended to force an entrance into the cave. Huldah's lips curled with scorn when she heard this. "Let them come. I will kill them one by one in the deep recesses of this cave with my own arm." But the whites were too discreet to place themselves so fully within the power of the Indians, as such a measure would have done.

Huldah could give the Indians no more hope. Some of them murmured that it would be better to surrender to the whites than die with hunger.

"Do as you choose," (said Huldah,) "for yourselves and your families. As for me and my child we will die inch by inch, but we will never be slaves."

The famine increased, and strong men who had no fear of death on the battlefield, sunk down and withered in its grasp. Women wept in silence and were sick at heart for their children who lifted up their little withered hands and with tears streaming down their wan faces, cried for food and they had none to give them.

Some of the men and women crouched down and sat all day long, with fixed eyes, motionless as statues, waiting for death: others gnashed their teeth and howled in half insanity and pain.

Huldah sent messages to all the tribe, that at midday she would offer a sacrifice in the great hall of the cave to the God of her fathers, and then the white men would withdraw their forces, and the Indians would have peace and food. Before the appointed time, she busied herself with making arrangements for the sacrifice.

In the middle of the hall was an altar, about six feet long and two feet wide and two feet high, which

was white and glittering almost as a diamond, formed by the dropping of the water. On each side of the hall, near the altar, were large openings that resembled, in the regularity of their angles and in their hight and beauty the gateways of great cathedrals. On the sides and above the doors the dropping water had been wreathed into flowers and leaves, more elegant than the chisel of the most elaborate artizan could make.

Nature here had been silently and sportively at work for ages, and seemed to have decorated the hall with all her most wonderful and fantastic beauties. The day came, and the Cherokee warriors, preceded by their chiefs, dressed in their gayest costume for the grand occasion, each with eagles' feathers in his hair and a blazing torch in his right hand, marched in slow and stately and solemn procession into the hall. It was soon filled, and on all sides boys, women, and children made part of the grand assembly.

They left a wide space around the altar for Huldah, and waited for half an hour in profound silence—a silence so deep that the dropping of the water in remote places could be distinctly heard.

The warm glow from the torches spread over the whole hall a blaze of light, and the stalactities and incrustations on the walls and roof blazed with coruscations of light as the glitter of millions of diamonds.

Huldah came out of a recess on the south side of the altar, and gazed for a moment on the magnificent array of chiefs and warriors, and on the dazzling splendor of the hall, and then kneeling at the altar, she prayed. She arose—cast another lingering glance at the scene before her, and went quickly to the side of the hall. As soon as she entered the recess and was hidden from

the eyes of all but God, she burst into a frantic wail of grief. She threw herself on the floor and wept in agony, and then arose and embraced her child—pressed him to her bosom and covered his face and hands with kisses.

She sat for a moment on a large rock, and held her child, as far as her arms extended, from her, and gazed steadily in his face. She wept, and again embraced him, and rose with knit brows and compressed lips, and leading him by the hand, went to the altar—her cheeks pale as marble and her jet black eyes rolling as in frenzy. As she led the child out when he saw the blaze of beauty before him, his eye brightened with pleasure.

She led him to the north side of the altar and said: “Chiefs and warriors of the Cherokees—Huldah thanks you, from her heart of hearts, for your kindness to herself and child. But she can no longer see your children die with hunger and your warriors slain in battle to keep her and her son from the hands of the white man. Huldah will make a sacrifice to-day,” and instantly she drew a dagger from her bosom and plunged it into the heart of her child. He fell upon the altar, and Huldah threw upon his bleeding wound the flag of her country. “No child of mine shall ever be a slave.”

She glided out of the hall through a narrow aperture that opened from it, and fled along a course of winding clefts in the rocks to the west entrance of the cave. The mass of falled rocks which Isham had removed soon after he came into it, had separated the apartments. Huldah had so often visited Minna that she had become acquainted with this fact. The Indians had not yet discovered it. She adroitly chose

this passage to escape from the Indians. She ran—ran—ran as swiftly as the doe before the hunter. Was she running upon death? Right before her were troops of men, each kneeling with one knee upon the ground with his rifle drawn up to his face, and his hand upon the lock. She ran—flew right in the face of these rifles, with their barrels glistening in the sunshine, and their muzzles bearing directly upon her. On—on she ran, heedless of danger till she came to their ranks.

“I surrender to the white men”

They cheered from the ranks and passed her behind them.

“I am your prisoner and now yield myself your slave.”

“Where is your child?”

“My child? My child is in heaven. Your child lies in yonder cave. His soul was mine to guard. His body was yours to oppress and crush.”

“What! have you murdered your child?”

“A murder has been committed, but look upon your own hands and see there the stain of his blood. Look into your own soul and feel there the weight of this guilt.”

“You lie,” said Norton, as he spurned her from him. “Seize—seize her, men. She is a murderer.”

She had been gone but a minute when Grey Eagle and Corliss came in at the south entrance of the cave. They saw the child bathed in blood lying still warm and bleeding upon the altar.

In an instant Grey Eagle comprehended, without explanation, the whole scene, and rushed out followed by Corliss to pursue Huldah. They ran, each with a rifle in his hand, down the rocky ravine, and as they

were running around the west side of the mountain two rifle shots were fired. Grey Eagle threw his arms in the air and fell upon his face. The bullet had passed through his heart. He was still for a moment and then rose to his feet, staggered forward a step or two, then again threw his arms wildly in the air, while jets of blood streamed from his mouth and nostrils, and fell forward. His strong limbs quivered for a moment and then were still.

Corliss fell and never rose again. The bullet had shattered his skull.

The Indians were filled with horror and fled from the cave the moment Grey Eagle and Corliss left it. No one attempted to hinder their retreat. A great company of the whites entered the cave as soon as the Indians went away.

The Reverend Jabez Clitters was there and ran with eager haste to the altar, around which a crowd of men had gathered. His foot slipped as he approached it, and his hands fell upon the warm and bleeding body of the little boy and were bathed and clotted with blood. He rose, and with the blood dripping from his hands, said, "I—I—I did NOT do it. How can a man do such a deed as this whose peace flows as a river?"

The Reverend Jabez Clitters looked again on his dripping hands. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "the murderer, she has killed HER OWN child."

The crowd looked with awe on the lifeless body of the child, still warm and bleeding before them, and then looked at Jabez, and went slowly and sadly away.

The hunt was over. Jabez went to his home and laid down on his bed, saying, as he did so, "My hands did not do it—I am clear. I am free from the stain of this blood."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE news of the death of Grey Eagle and Corliss soon reached Mr. Rashleigh in his secluded dwelling. About a month after it occurred he called upon Mrs. Gilpin. They sat long in the little parlor in conversation—but we will not state all that was said. It is enough for the reader to know that the copy of the record which had been sent by mail to Mrs. Gilpin was brought out, and though Rashleigh said he did not care to see it, he was half compelled to read it.

“It is useless now for all purposes,” said Mrs. Gilpin, “except to relieve me in part from reproach. I know that I should have frankly disclosed the whole truth to you, and I feel that I am guilty in not having done so.”

“Your father, madam, told me that he prevented you,” said Mr. Rashleigh.

Mrs. Gilpin was silent for a moment and then said, “Yes, sir, but I did wrong in suffering him to do so. I should have told you my exact position, even if he objected to it.”

“If you erred, Mrs. Gilpin, you erred on the side of duty to your father.”

In a few days, preparations were made for the wedding, and on the day before it was to have taken place, a stranger rode up to Mr. Rashleighs.

“Is this Mr. Rashleigh, sir?”

“Yes, sir.”

"Then, sir, I am the Sheriff of this county and have two writs for service upon you. This, sir, is a copy of a summons in an action for damages, brought by Edward Norton against you for harboring one of his slaves. This writ is a capias on an indictment found against you by the grand jury of this county, for harboring the same slave, and aiding in her escape from Mr. Norton. You are my prisoner, sir."

"Very well," said Mr. Rashleigh, "I did harbor and conceal the poor woman, and greatly regret that I did not do so more effectually. I am willing to pay any penalty that may be inflicted for such an act."

The Sheriff smiled.

"But, sir," continued Mr. Rashleigh, "I wish to return by to-morrow night, as I have a personal engagement that must be met."

The Sheriff smiled again. "There is no danger, Mr. Rashleigh, from what I have heard of you, that you will attempt to escape from the jurisdiction of the Court."

"Me, escape, sir? No, sir—no, sir."

"I know you will not, sir. If you will meet me at nine, to-morrow morning, at the court house, I will not enforce your further attendance to-day."

"Enforce, sir!" said Rashleigh, "these are strange words. I will be at the court house to-morrow at the time you have mentioned."

"That will do," said the Sheriff, "I shall expect you."

Early the next morning Mr. Rashleigh rode over to the court house. All the people there but one were strangers to him. He saw a woman seated in a corner, and thought, at the slight look he gave her, that he had seen her before, but could not remember where. Pre-

sently Tom Giles came in and stood by the side of the woman, and Rashleigh remembered that it was his neighbor, Mrs. Polly Giles.

A young man was walking about the court room whom Mr. Rashleigh thought, perhaps, was an attorney's clerk. The young man went on the bench and the court was opened.

A man was tried for stealing a powder horn and convicted, fined and imprisoned. Another was charged with homicide, and after a short trial acquitted. Mr. Rashleigh was surprised at the verdict, as the evidence of the man's guilt seemed clear. Mr. Rashleigh's case was next called.

"You are charged in this indictment with harboring and concealing one mulatto girl named Huldah—a slave of Mr. Edward Norton—and aiding in her escape from him. Are you guilty, or not guilty?"

"I did conceal her for about a week," said Rashleigh.

The judge looked surprised. "Have you counsel, sir?"

"No, sir, thank you, I do not want counsel. The facts are stated with substantial correctness in the indictment. I do not deny them. I have done what I certainly will do again in the same circumstances."

"Are you guilty, or not guilty?" said the prosecuting attorney.

"I have just told you that I did harbor the woman named in the indictment, whom I have never doubted is Mr. Norton's slave. I have often seen her at his house and engaged in his service. I am ready," continued Rashleigh, "to pay the penalty," and as he said so he drew from his vest pocket two or three sovereigns, which he held in his fingers.

"Guilty," said the prosecuting attorney.

"Certainly," said Mr. Rashleigh as he took his seat.

The clerk made an entry of the word "guilty" on the indictment, and handed it up to the judge.

The judge read the indictment carefully over, and looked at Mr. Rashleigh. "Have you consulted counsel about this matter?"

"No, sir, I never heard of it until yesterday. The matter is too unimportant to take advice upon it, and it is undeniable that I did harbor and conceal the lady."

The judge paused again and then said:—"Stand up Richard Rashleigh."

Mr. Rashleigh arose.

"You have been indicted by the grand jury of this county, and are charged in the first count of the indictment with harboring and concealing one Hulda, a mulatto woman, the slave of Edward Norton, knowing her to be his slave. And in the second count of the indictment you are charged with aiding and abetting in the escape of the same slave from Edward Norton, knowing her to be his slave. You have plead guilty to these charges, and nothing now remains for the court but to proceed to judgment. We sentence you, Richard Rashleigh, to five years imprisonment in the penitentiary of this State, and to pay the costs of this prosecution."

"Imprisonment! Penitentiary!" exclaimed Mr. Rashleigh as he fell back into his seat.

The clerk called the next case.

The Sheriff ordered "silence in court," and the jailor conducted Mr. Rashleigh to prison.

Tom Giles and his wife went home the same day, and the news of Rashleigh's sentence was soon spread over the neighborhood.

Mr. Rashleigh's servants were thrown into the greatest consternation. "These savage and blood-thirsty Hamericans," said Thomas Jinks, "will murder hall of us. This country is not hold Hengland I can tell you, where they would no more think of sentencing a gentleman to the penitentiary for his ospitality than they would for praying to God. This is a barbarous and honly alf civilized country, and I'll get hout of hit as soon as I can."

They all sat, in the evening, around the fire and wept for their kind master, and determined to visit him in prison, and then return, as soon as possible, to England. They visited him the next day, and after he had paid them their wages, they bade him a sad adieu. In a few days they sailed from New York for England, and landed in safety in their old home, glad to leave the land of liberty forever.

CHAPTER XLIX.

PAUL HUNTER did what he could to console Mrs. Gilpin and Harriet; but their sorrows were too great to be comforted.

“That old—old curse,” said Mrs. Gilpin, “still pursues us with steady and unfaltering pace. All our happiness is blasted in its bud. Oh, how gladly would I lie down in the graye, and let the red earth cover me as a mantle of roses.

Paul Hunter could not restrain his indignation. Whenever he met any man in the road, or in the field near the school house, or at church, he was loud in denouncing the conduct of Norton and in his praise of Mr. Rashleigh.

“Mr. Rashleigh,” said one man to him, “may be right in some things, but he should not have harbored that girl. She is Mr. Norton’s property, and he had no right to do anything that might hinder him from obtaining the possession of her.”

“She is *not* his property,” said Paul Hunter, indignantly.

“He bought her at auction in Charleston, sir, and has a good bill of sale for her. I have seen it myself.”

“That may all be so,” replied Paul; “indeed, I have no doubt of it; still she is not and never was his property. No man can have property in the flesh and blood and body and soul of a human being. God did not make human flesh and blood to be property.”

"Then, sir, our whole system of slave holding is wrong."

"It is, sir. It is ~~tyranny~~ⁿ—not law—and every man who sanctions it, directly or indirectly, by open declaration, or by silence when he ought to speak—by his precept or by his example—takes the side of the oppressor and the tyrant."

"You are indiscreet," said the man to Paul, "such language can not be tolerated in this State."

"Tolerated, or not tolerated, I will speak as I think. The whole affair is disgraceful to a civilized country. I had rather be in prison with Mr. Rashleigh, than at large with his oppressors."

"Well, sir, if you are not more careful in your speech you will share Mr. Rashleigh's imprisonment, and, perhaps, fare worse than he does."

Paul pressed his suit now, when all hearts were in such deep distress, with redoubled earnestness. "It was not a prophecy," he said to Hatty, "as your mother stated to me, but only a principle which, perhaps, may apply to your family, and to thousands of other families. Whatever misfortunes may come, I would rather share them with you than live without you."

"Paul!—Paul, you do not know what you ask. Calamities such as ours may seem light to those who have never felt them. But all have withered, and all will wither, beneath their power."

"I will take no denial Hatty. You have told me all. I know the bitterest and the worst—but do not condemn me to bear a greater curse than you have ever endured—the curse of existence without you."

"My mother," said Hatty, "does not approve of it."

Paul seized her hand. "It is mine, Hatty. I will be happy."

Mrs. Gilpin remonstrated with Paul, but yielded to his importunities, and the day was named for the marriage. But, after a few days of happiness, one morning when Paul went to his school he found a crowd of men in the house. He went in and bowed to them, when a low, thick set man, with a red face and thick neck, shut the door and locked it. The whole group laughed. "We have you now," said one of the men.

"Yes, sir, I am here," said Paul.

"You are our prisoner, sir."

"Prisoner! for what?"

"For making too free a use of that tongue of yours."

"Too free a use of my tongue? I have told no falsehood about any person."

"Lie or truth, makes not a bit of matter to us. You've come among us, and has slandered our institutions, and has been trying to make the niggers rise and kill all the white people."

"I have not. The man who says so is guilty of falsehood."

"Come, young man, this is rather bold talk. You're our prisoner, and we mean to duck you in the creek, and then to lead you out of this State, and if ever you're caught back here again we'll hang you."

"Let's hang him now," said the red faced man who had locked the door, "he's only a yankee."

"Hang him—hang him," said two others.

"No," said the first speaker, "we agreed what to do when we came here. Let's do all we agreed to do and no more."

"Men," said Paul Hunter, "listen to me. There are fourteen of you, and I am alone. It is cowardice thus to overpower me by mere brute force. We do

not treat you so when you come to my native State."

"It's no use talking, young man—not a bit of it. We come here to punish you for your free use of your tongue, not to argue the matter with you. If you have any arms surrender them at once."

"I have none—I never carry them—I always look upon men who do so as ruffians."

"Young man, do not provoke us. Your insults will do you no good and much hurt. You must leave this State forthwith. Are you ready to do so?"

"Yes," said Paul, "as soon as I shall go to the house where I board and pay my bill, and pack up my clothes."

"We will not allow that. There is something due you for teaching school; we will collect it and pay off the bill. As for your clothes, the suit you have on is plenty good enough for such as you."

Paul's eyes flashed with anger. The red faced man laid his hands upon him, two others came to his aid, and Paul Hunter was thrown upon the floor, his hands and feet tied with ropes, so tightly, that they cut into his flesh.

We draw a veil over the indignities inflicted by the ruffians upon the person of Paul Hunter. Resistance would have been but madness. He was overpowered by greatly superior force—by men half-intoxicated and brutalized with passion.

They carried him to the border of the State and dismissed him with fresh indignities and threats that they would kill him if he ever returned. The men who had conducted him out of the State, shouted as he left them, and Paul Hunter returned to New York a sadder and a wiser man.

"Don't you think," said one of the men to the others, "that the people in the Free States will at length resent such treatment?"

"No, they dare not do it. One of us can whip four of them—and—so that they can make money—they don't care about such things."

This fresh blow fell with stunning force upon Mrs. Gilpin and Harriet. They could not weep. They sat, pale and motionless, and silent, for half an hour after they heard it. Mrs. Gilpin then said. "Oh, my daughter, I DID hope the curse would end with me. But it pursues us from generation to generation."

Harriet found relief in tears—while Mrs. Gilpin moved noiselessly about the house as attentive to her duties as though nothing had occurred. It was only by looking at her calm features and into her deeply sunken eyes—that the intelligent observer could see that the heart that beat below them was more than half crushed.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE weary, weary days passed slowly away, and Brandon was still within the prison limits. Old debts which he had forgotten, or which had been paid, were again and dishonestly brought forward and sued on. Their accumulated sums seemed more than enough to exhaust the slender remains of his once large estate. He was sad and gloomy. His future had no bright star to cheer him. He no longer wished to leave his room, but sat there thoughtfully and alone all day, and at night, with a sad and heavy heart, retired to rest—the rest of forgetfulness—more sweet than sleep.

But time brings all things—even lawsuits—to an end, and at last the day came when his case was to be tried and justice done to the parties. It was tried and the claim against him was greatly reduced, but still the residue which he was ordered to pay greatly exceeded his means. No other resource was now left to him than to make an assignment of his property—of all his property—including his little farm in Tennessee—for the benefit of his creditors. It was done, and houseless, and homeless, and penniless, Brandon was discharged.

An old friend came forward and offered him a small *loan* of money, which was tearfully accepted, with thanks that choked him as he uttered them, and then, after bidding adieu to his native State, and to the kind friends who were near him, he started on his long and

weary journey home. No—he had no home now—to his family in Tennessee.

He reached there in safety and was welcomed—only as one can be welcomed whose heart is filled with gloom and grief, by others whose hearts are as sad.

His story was soon told. They were to leave their humble home—how soon he could not tell—and go—they knew not whither.

“We have but one resource left us now, my dear Martha, and I regret even to think of it. You must sell your slaves. The money which you will obtain for them will be enough, with care, to keep you and Harriet as long as you live, and as for me—I shall not want any person’s help long.”

“Sell our people, father!”

“Yes, my child—there is no help for it. I know that you love them and dislike to part from them, but what can we do? We have no other means of obtaining bread.”

“But, father, I have grown up under the care of aunt Kitty. She nursed me when I was a child, and has been a mother to me.”

“Well, perhaps you can reserve her and sell the others.”

“Sell her husband—old uncle Peter, and her children and grand-children’s father? Separate her whole family from her?”

“What else can we do, Martha?”

“Trust in God, father.”

The old man, wearied by his journey, soon retired to rest, and Mrs. Gilpin and her daughter sat up long and late to talk over their sorrows.

“Mother, I am willing to do anything in my power.

to aid you and grand papa in earning an honest living. I can teach music, and French, and drawing, and those things, which I have learned only as accomplishments, can now be made the means for our support. We are poor, but I can work, and will work, day and night, and I am sure you will have no reason to fear but that I can earn enough to keep us from want. We must NOT sell our people. It will kill me, mother—I do believe it—if we do so."

"I can not—*will* not sell one of them," said Mrs. Gilpin. "We have had calamities enough; and I do not think that to add to our sins will diminish our misfortunes. I have drunk so deeply and so often from the cup of sorrow, but I dare not press it to another's lips."

"What will you do, mother?"

"I will place temptation out of my way. My purpose is fixed now. I will not trust myself. My character may change, and I may not be able to resist temptations that I do not know of. I will, my dear, emancipate all my slaves to-morrow."

"To-morrow, Mother?"

"Yes, as early as possible, to-morrow morning, I will execute deeds of emancipation for them. It shall be out of my power to do evil."

"We will not have a cent in the world, then, mother; but I do most heartily approve of your purpose. My heart feels lightened of its load of grief already."

"And so too does mine."

"Well, mother," said Harriet, "I have just now found out a new source of happiness. In the midst of the deepest gloom, do some noble, generous, and just action, and the heart will be relieved of half its grief."

Early the next morning, the colored people were collected in the little parlor and seated, while Mrs. Gilpin wrote the necessary papers and handed them to the older members of the family.

“Free—Missus—all of us people free?”

“Yes, Peter, I have set every one of you free. You are at this moment as free as I am, and may God bless and protect you.”

“Thank you, Missus. Bress de Lord. Bress de good Lord, and you too, Missus. We’re all free at last. We’ve been praying for freedom to come all our lives. Now it’s come, so unexpected too. We warn’t looking for it jist now.”

“Do n’t speak so loud, uncle Peter. Your old master is very tired by his long journey from Virginia, and I wish him to rest as long as he can this morning. Do not disturb him.”

Kitty wiped her eyes with the corner of her check apron. Some of the younger ones sobbed aloud, and after a moment of warm thanks, the happy friends of Mrs. Gilpin withdrew.

They went to the kitchen, which was so far from the house, that their voices could not be heard, and there collected in a group around old Peter, who, seated in a chair, was explaining to them the cause of their unexpected blessing.

“I know’d it was a coming, but I must confess it comed a little sooner than I expected. The way of it is jist this—young Master Paul, he’s been a talkin’ a good deal lately to Miss Hatty. Ha! ha! ha!—all them long walks of nights wid her leaning on his arm, aint been for nothin’, I tell you,” and the old man laughed so heartily, that the whole group around him,

even the baby in its mother's arms laughed also, as loudly as they could.

"I tell you people here, and you young gals, 'specially, what don't know much, that when a nice young gentleman is a courtin' a young lady, and she gits in love wid him, that he has considerable influence wid her."

Peter crossed his hands and laid them in his lap, and was silent for half a minute.

"Yes, I tell you," said Peter—looking very wise—that when a gal is in love, the young fellow what she loves, has a pretty considerable power over her, 'specially to get her to 'mancipate.'

"But, uncle Peter," said one of the girls, Miss Hatty didn't set us free—it was Miss Martha that did it."

"Oh! you get away, gal—you don't know nothin': When a young lady gets in love wid a nice young gentleman like Masser Paul dere, why de lady's mother love de gentleman most as much as de lady do herself. It's all de same ting, in course—all right at last."

"Do you think, uncle Peter, that they 'll get married to one another, now that he 's drove out of the State?"

"Do I think so?—why how you do talk. I 've told you—you don't know nothin'—nothin' at all. You're too young and child-like. Do your uncle think they 'll get married! No, he don't think nothin' about it—he *knows* it."

Brandon came down to breakfast, later than usual, sad and feeble. Mrs. Gilpin told the servant that waited on the table, to stay in the kitchen until he should be called.

The ladies were cheerful—were too happy to conceal their joy.

“I am glad to see you all so cheerful, this morning, daughter. This is the first day for nearly a year that I have come down to a meal, where the table was surrounded by friendly faces. Your happiness lightens my own heart. Have you always been so while I was away?”

“Oh, no, father. This too has been the most pleasant morning we have had for years. You are with us now, and I hope we will be happy. But there is another cause for joy, to-day, of which I may as well tell you at once. I have just emancipated all my slaves.”

The knife and fork dropped from Brandon’s hands, he trembled and turned pale.

“Emancipated your slaves, Martha!—We are utterly ruined. Your act is one of downright madness. Who has advised you to take so rash a step?”

“Father, I formed my determination to do so last night. No one advised me. If I had sought advice from any one, it would have been from yourself, in preference to all others.”

“Why, then did you not ask me?”

“Because I was resolved to do it, and it is not fair to ask advice after my mind is fully made up and my purpose formed.”

“What shall we do, Martha? We are utterly ruined. These slaves were all the property that stood between us and beggary.”

“Trust in God.”

“And waste our estate, Martha?”

“No, father, ‘Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed.’”

The old man sighed and was silent.

In a few days an agent came from Virginia to sell Brandon's farm. He called upon the family, and was polite and kind, and said that he regretted the inconvenience he would cause them, but, he added, "You know what my duties are; I can not avoid them."

"We do know it," said Brandon, "in what way can we aid you to discharge them?"

"At what time," said the agent, "shall I state in the advertisement that possession will be given to the purchaser?"

The little group, Brandon and his daughter and grand-daughter, were silent for a moment.

"What is the greatest length of time you can give us, sir," said Mrs. Gilpin. "We have not yet provided another home for ourselves."

"Forty days."

"Thank you—that will be enough."

"Yes, sir," said Brandon, thirty days will do. Let us have the thing over as soon as possible. I am tired of suspense and perplexity. I want repose and peace.

The day of sale soon came, and Mrs. Kite was among the few persons who came to the house.

She sat in her carriage, and although urged by Mrs. Gilpin to alight and come into the house, she refused to do so.

"I am delighted, Mrs. Gilpin, with the resplendent beauty of your location, and the salubrity of the atmosphere around it. It appears to be favorable to longevity. I do believe that if I resided here my days would be so protracted that I should be an octogenarian."

"Yes, madam, it is, I believe, a very healthy place. the mountain air is fine and bracing."

The sale commenced, and Mrs. Kite was the first bidder: her bid was about one-fourth of the value of the land. The crier went on slowly. He had but one sale to make that day. Other bids were made and Mrs. Kite, after long pauses, outbid them all. The property was knocked down to her.

"Look at these papers," she said, as she handed a package to the auctioneer, "and you will see from them that I am the person for whose benefit this sale has been made." The auctioneer carefully examined them. "I see, madam, that you are the owner of the claim on which the suit in Virginia was brought, and under which Mr. Brandon was imprisoned. It is all right, madam. I will make the deed for the property to you, and take your receipt."

"Yes, sir, I did purchase that claim, and that suit was instituted and conducted for my use and benefit. I have made a handsome speculation by it. My husband, Burl Kite, Esq.—now deceased, informed me, in his lifetime that something could be made from it, and after his death, I undertook it. The place is mine, you say."

"Yes, madam,"

"Call over at my nephew's, Edward Norton, Esq., and we will have the necessary papers executed."

"I will, madam—I will be there this afternoon."

"Drive home, Ned, by the most frequented thoroughfare, as soon as possible. I am both fatigued and hungry."

The carriage drove off, and Brandon now first learned who his unrelenting creditor was.

"Burl Kite—I knew the fellow," he said. "He was four years an overseer on one of my plantations. He cheated me, and I dismissed him. He always was a knave. And this Norton is his nephew. Well, there are strange changes in this world. The overseers in the south and their descendants are rapidly supplanting all the old families and engrossing the wealth and honors of the country."

MRS. Gilpin told her father of her reconciliation with Mr. Rashleigh, and that he insisted that the marriage should take place soon, and thus give him a better right than he then had to assist the family; and of the sad fate of Mr. Rashleigh.

“Do you really believe, Martha, that Mr. Rashleigh did harbor that slave of Mr. Norton’s?”

“I have no doubt of it, father. And I have heard, too, that he stated in court that he harbored her. Of course, if he did it, he would not deny it, and would not have said he did so unless the fact warranted the assertion.”

“I am really surprised, Martha, that so intelligent and virtuous a gentleman as Mr. Rashleigh should have been guilty of such conduct. He is an Englishman, it is true, and can not be supposed to concur with us in our views of such things; but his judgment is too sound to permit me to doubt that he is not well aware of the necessity and propriety of yielding prompt and full obedience to the laws of our country.”

“I do not know, father, by what course of reasoning Mr. Rashleigh has reached the conclusion that his conduct is proper. I am sure, though, that he has examined the matter with care, and that his conduct is the result of his judgment.”

The next day Mr. Brandon rode over to visit Mr. Rashleigh in prison. He found him composed and sad.

Brandon informed him that he had assigned all his property to a trustee for the benefit of his creditors—that his farm had been sold—his daughter had, from a womanly impulse, emancipated all her slaves—and in a few days they would have to leave their little home and return to their friends in Virginia.

“My dwelling is empty, Mr. Brandon, as all my servants have returned to England. You will confer a favor on me if you will remove to it and take the care of the farm.”

“I would not have mentioned our sad condition to you, Mr. Rashleigh, if I had thought it would have called out this kind offer.”

“Do not think of it for a moment, Mr. Brandon. I did not know until now the full extent of your misfortunes; but I intended to insist upon your family taking my house while I shall be absent from it. It is well furnished, and the farm, when cultivated by your recently emancipated people, will, I hope, produce some return for your care.”

“I am very sorry, Mr. Rashleigh, to find you in so sad a condition, and hope you will be released in a few days.”

“I have reason to think so too, Mr. Brandon. When I first heard of this affair I supposed it to be a trifling matter, (like suffering a road to be out of repair,) and which could be adjusted by a small fine; and as I knew that I did the act charged, I did not think it worth while to take advice upon it. But since I have learned how severe the penalty is, I have called an able counselor to my aid, who assures me that the proceedings are in some

parts so defective that the judgment will be set aside. If so, I have no reason to doubt that I will join you in a few days at my house, and then, sir, with your approbation, I will be made your happy son-in-law."

" You have my approbation—that has long since been given."

Very soon after Mr. Rashleigh was taken to the jail he wrote to some of his relations and friends, informing them of his position. We shall give extracts from but two of his letters.

After giving to Mrs. Penhall, his sister, a full narrative of what he had done, and the result of it, he says—

" I think I hear you, my dear sister, exclaim as you read, ' This is the result of my brother Richard's republicanism.' Not so, my dear sister. My imprisonment here is not the result of republicanism, but of its opposite—of tyranny. I know that republicanism is right, with the same absolute certainty that I know that the Bible is a revelation from God. The law, ' Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' is the basis of all republicanism. The reason of the law is that your neighbor's rights are equal to your own. But a country that makes slavery its principal care is not republican—simply, because slave-holding is despotism. Such a government, if democratic in form, is worse in its practical results upon the people's rights than the despotism of a single tyrant. Because, when the responsibility of such a government is divided among thousands, no one of all these thousands feels his part of the responsibility:—while, if it was all concentrated in a single sceptre, the man who held it would feel its full weight.

Richard Baxter and William Penn, and others, in England, were prosecuted for *preaching the gospel*. I

am convicted for *practising* it. This may seem strange in a State whose organic law contains a full guarantee for religious liberty. But this guarantee is either misunderstood or disregarded. In this country all such guarantees are, at present, of no value. Sin, in all ages and among all nations, has ever formed an alliance with the State, and clings to it for support as a poisonous vine clings to the oak, and kills it as it does so. This country is not exempted from this universal law. Their national sin is slaveholding, which is now entwined and enfibered through its every department.

“They resist a union of Church and State, but support one of Sin and State. They think the one destructive to liberty; but seem, by their conduct, to think the other essential to their happiness.

“I am now a victim of this alliance, as thousands of men, in all ages and countries, have been its victims. I regret it, but cannot murmur.”

He wrote to a friend in France the next day. After giving a narrative of the causes that led to his imprisonment, he added:—

“We are both of us republicans from conviction and from principle. I still, notwithstanding my adversity, have full and unshaken faith in the general correctness of my principles. But I have erred in supposing that slavery and republicanism can co-exist under the same government. It is impossible that they can do so. The vital principle of republicanism is LIBERTY. Slaveholding is DESPOTISM. A slaveholding State is but a community of petty tyrants, each man supporting all the others in their wrongs. To do so, they must first crush out the vital principle of liberty; not the liberty of the colored man only, but the personal and civil and religious liberty of all.

“What remedy, you ask, can reach these evils? There is but one—the reformation of the whole people, by the preaching of the gospel of Christ.

“When the people are corrupt, they will elect corrupt men to represent them in all departments of their government. They have, of course, the wish to do so, and as the power is in their own hands they will do it.

* * * * *

“Still, I do not despair even of this country. The ever watchful providence of God protects each man in it, as if he stood alone in the world; and HE, and HE alone, can control the destiny of nations. My HOPE, my FAITH, my CONFIDENCE is in HIM. Oh! my dear friend, how cheerless this world would be if no God reigned over it. The patriot would look at the future without hope, and at the past—but I will not weary you.

ADIEU.”

In a few days Mr. Brandon and his family removed to Mr. Rashleigh’s dwelling, and in less than a month after that time, the judgment against Mr. Rashleigh was set aside for some error in the indictment, and he was discharged from his imprisonment before he entered the gloomy walls of the penitentiary.

The next day after his return Mrs. Gilpin and Mr. Rashleigh were married, and in a few days thereafter they started, accompanied by Mr. Brandon and Harriet, for England.

The recently emancipated slaves accompanied them as far as New York, and then were generously supplied, by Mr. Rashleigh, with money to begin to live in freedom.

“Ah, Miss Martha, sunshine come at last,” said old Peter, “It’s a long lane that’s got no turn to it, and a

dark night that's got no day-light coming. The sun come out at last from behind the cloud and shine bright now. Dem long walks under de big trees in de ole yard in Tennessee not all for nuffin. You jest put a letter in de post office; I'll take it for you, and see if Massa Paul aint here too quick. Ha! ha! ha! ole Peter know somethings as well as anybody."

He took a letter to the post office, and Massa Paul came "too quick," just as Peter had predicted. He invited the party to his father's house, in the interior of the State, where they remained a few days, after which Mr. Rashleigh and his bride, accompanied by her father, set sail for England. Harriet's intended journey thither was postponed, as her husband, Mr. Paul Hunter, could not then sail with the party.

When the party returned to New York old Peter soon found them. "Ah, Miss Harriet—married at last. Well, I'se not s'prised at dat; I knowed it would be so. Ole Peter, he knows somethings jist as good as white people. Sunshine come, Miss Martha—daylight come at last. Ah! Peter knowed it all, long nuff ago. Miss Martha good to us, and de Lord good to her. De Lord likes people that's good to poor folks, and takes care of em."

and his hands were covered with a dark red stain. He was in a state of great alarm, and his voice trembled as he said, "I have killed a child."

CHAPTER LI.

THE Reverend Jabez Clitters never recovered from the severe shock he received at the time he fell upon the bleeding body of the murdered child. He would sit up at times in his bed, with his long grey hair hanging upon his shoulders, and his shirt sleeves pulled up half way to his elbow, exposing his long bony hands and his thin and spider like arms.

"Bring me a basin of water, Martha, and let me wash my hands—there is blood upon them. Bring me a towel and wipe them—wipe them. Wipe them hard—I can't get the blood off. It sticks. The smell of it makes me sick. I—I—I did not kill that child. Oh no—I did not kill that child. Its own mother murdered it. She killed it. Bring me a towel quickly: the smell makes me sick."

Sister Martha Clitters brought a basin of water and washed and wiped his hands, and Jabez held them before his face as he laid back on his pillow. "Ah! they are clean now—clean—so white. Then he started again, raised his white form in a sitting posture, and cried out, "Bring me more water. The blood still sticks to them. Oh—Oh—I can not wash it off."

After months of slow decay a messenger was hurriedly dispatched over to Mr. Norton's with the request to come quickly for Mr. Clitters was dying. Jeptah Jothram was at Norton's when the messenger arrived. He had been intoxicated for a week, and was

taken to Norton's to be sobered. Norton and Jothram rode over to Mr. Clitters' house. Jeptha Jothram was pale and weak, his hands and knees shook as he entered the dwelling.

Brother Cray was seated by the bed-side, talking to Jabez Clitters. "Brother Clitters, your peace flows as a river, don't it?"

"A river—a river. Yes—yes—I see—I see a river full of blood. The west bank of the river looks like a jagged cliff of brimstone—bare, and towering up toward the copper-colored sky, which is half concealed by dun colored, motionless clouds, and the west bank, in places, burns with blue flame. It is not Jordon—oh, no—it is not—Jordon. A child is floating on the river, it has soft, brown hair, which floats on the water. It is dead. I—I—I did NOT kill it. My hands are clean. Look at them," and as he said so, he held his hands before his face, drew them closer and closer, and extended his fingers. "Yes—no—no, they are not clean. Blood—blood is on them. Wipe it off—wipe it off. Will no one hear my dying request? Oh! do wash it off—it grieves and afflicts me."

Brother Cray rose from his seat to get the basin, and Jeptha Jothram took his place and held the hand of the dying man for a moment in silence. He then sprang to his feet in a fit of delirium, with his eyes dilated and glazed:

"Drive it off—there—there it is. It is sitting on his breast. The skeleton—the skeleton of a child. It is kneeling on his breast. Both its fleshless hands are round his neck. Its fleshless fingers grasp his throat—tighter—tighter. It is choaking him to death. Listen—listen. It is whispering in his ear. Drive it off. Drive

it away—away—away. It says you—you murdered ME. Look—there—there—it is gone."

They looked—and the mantle of the Reverend Jabez Clitters had fallen upon the shoulders of brethren in the ministry, who still wear it, and are vain of the distinction it confers upon them.

When the men were preparing the body of the Reverend Jabez Clitters for the grave, they found a piece of thick paper over his heart, on which was written, in his own large, awkward, hand-writing, the words:—

“ HOLINESS TO THE LORD,
AND
HOLD ON TO THE NIGGERS.”

Sister Martha Clitters, the next day after the funeral, sewed it to a piece of paste board and surrounded it with a fringe made of orange colored yarn, and hung it under the miniature of her departed husband, over the mantelpiece.

It was so much admired by the ministering brethren who visited the house after her husband's departure, that she made patterns of it in samplers, on white ground, with orange colored letters and fringes to the samplers. She derived great comfort from this pious labor for more than a month after her husband's decease. The ministering brethren received these tokens of their sister's regard with gratitude, and, it has been said, wear them next their hearts, especially when they come to preach in the free States. She made one for Brother Cray; but that was worked on a wide blue ribbon, and with red silk letters. Brother Cray received it with warm thanks.

It is said that many of these samplers have been sent

to Doctors of Divinity and learned professors in Colleges in the Free States, and that these gentlemen wear them nearest their hearts, as CHARMS to preserve "the unity of the church, and the peace of Zion."

But it is difficult to believe that intelligent gentlemen in this country are so superstitious as to believe in SUCH amulets; and Mr. Strong feels, as Tom Giles did toward the young man in Memphis who told him that his neice, Mrs. Dr. Webler, "were painted."

If some of these Doctors and Professors would submit to be searched, it might be the means of settling public opinion on this question, by disproving or proving the charge. Will not some of their friends insist upon the application of this test to these gentlemen?

Part of the yarn with which Sister Martha Clitters worked these samplers must have been badly dyed, for very soon the words "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" faded away and became invisible—the color in the remainder of the sentence grows brighter with age.

Jabez was buried, and a funeral sermon was preached, in which his saint-like virtues were extolled.

A week afterward Jeptha Jothram wrote the editorial notice of his death, already mentioned, and religious newspapers puffed him up to heaven. But among his virtues, by an odd omission of all the writers and preachers, no mention was made of his zeal in the slave hunt.

The Reverend Jabez Clitters, Jr., placed a marble monument over his father's grave, with these words deeply engaven upon it:

"HE RESTS FROM HIS LABORS AND HIS WORKS
DO FOLLOW HIM."

... in the open air I had been sitting by a window in the
old wooden seat with the back to the wall, a small hole
had been made in the back of the seat from a nail
a son of a nail had

CHAPTER LII.

IT would be ungallant to close this book without some further notice of sister Martha Clitters. About a year after the death of her husband, she said to Lucretia Crownly—the daughter of a poor widow, a member of the church, whom she had “adopted,” a girl about fifteen years of age:

“Letty, I want you to come and pull every grey hair out of my head. When brother Cray was here yesterday, I saw him looking at my hair, and I’m sure he noticed them.”

“Why, la! aunt, if I do so, your head will be as bald and as red as the old turkey gobler’s.”

“No, it won’t, Letty, Pull them out, every one of them.”

While Letty was at work, sister Martha Clitters said:

“Letty, I’ve noticed that brother Cray don’t talk as much as he used to about sanctification and slavery. When he talks about slavery he never mentions sanctification, and when he talks about sanctification he don’t mention slavery. He puts them more widely apart.”

“Yes, aunt, you know when he was here last week, he said that Dr. Shirkwell disapproves of joining them in the same conversation or sermon, and he said the same thing week before last when he was here.”

“I have some scruples of conscience, myself,” said sister Martha Clitters, “about holding slaves when the price is as good for them as it is now. I half believe

it ain't right to hold slaves, and so I've made up my mind to sell Sam."

"Sell little Samy, aunt! I pity the poor boy. He ain't more than twelve years old, and it will be so hard to take him down south."

"Yes, Letty, but brother Cray says he likes to see a lady have a regular set of teeth, and mine are quite irregular, and greatly decayed. Half of them, too have been pulled out. I saw that dentist last week, who is going about the country, and he says he can't make me a full set of the best kind under two hundred dollars. I must have 'em: brother Cray, I'm sure, will admire them."

The grey hair was all pulled out of the lady's head, and in two months afterward she had a full set of new teeth, but the dentist who made them must have been a novice in his art, for they were very yellow and too long.

About the same time little Sam, the boy who waited on the table at the great dinner, when Dr. Shirkwell was there, disappeared: He was never seen in that neighborhood afterward.

Not long afterward, brother Cray and sister Clitters were in the same parlor, to be united in marriage. The bride was one foot taller and nine years older than the bridegroom. After the ceremony he led her weeping to her seat. Brother Cray smiled delighted with his bride.

"My dear," said brother Cray, "why do you weep?"

"Oh, brother Cray, I can't but think of my former husband, he was so HOLY."

As she pronounced the word, the upper row of her teeth became loose, and fell into her mouth, nearly

strangling her. The company gathered round her, and, after some excitement, and with great effort, the teeth were drawn up from her throat and laid in her lap. She sat still for a moment and was then led weeping into an adjoining room, by brother Cray.

* * * * *

Norton gained the suit which he brought against Rashleigh, for damages for harboring Huldah, and sold his plantation to pay the debt. Mrs. Kite purchased it with money that Norton placed in her hands to do so—and soon afterward conveyed it to him.

“Cousin Ned,” said, Mrs. Kite, “you have been going to the State Legislature long enough. I want you to take Mary to Washington City. Get yourself elected a member of Congress.”

“Oh, aunt, that’s easier said than done. Thousands of men would like to be members of Congress who never can be.”

“Edward, all things yield to determined purpose. If you *will* go to Congress you can.”

“How so, aunt?”

“Why you have only to enlist the aid of two or three more newspaper editors of your party and the thing is done. Make large donations to the cause, Ned, by the way of supporting the press. Do it for the sake of the principles involved in this great contest, and then when your friends shall bring you out as a candidate, these editors will be predisposed to give your claims a favorable consideration.”

Norton was elected to Congress, and was for a long time one of the most popular men in the country. He knew no higher law than the constitution, and of course his oath to support that instrument had no grip

upon his conscience. He, therefore, was clamorous for it when it suited his purpose, and trampled upon it when it stood in his way.

He bullied the northern members who differed from his opinions, and flattered those who agreed with him: Boasted of his blood and birth, although he was the son of an overseer, and the little education he had was bestowed upon him as a charity.

He deserted his principles and his party whenever it seemed his personal interest to do so, and returned to them with unabashed front when his interests were promoted by it. He allied himself with all parties in turn, and deserted each when they were in the minority. He was a great and successful POLITICIAN.

Many years after these occurrences, as Norton was standing in the lobby of the legislature of a neighboring State, cheerfully conversing with a friend, an altercation sprung up between two members in the body. A blow was struck and a pistol fired. The ball missed the object at which it was aimed and pierced Norton's heart.

It is but an act of simple justice to the gentleman who fired the unlucky shot, to state, that he was very sorry for the accident. He wrote a very handsome apology to the widow of Mr. Norton, so beautiful in its language and so deep in its pathos that Mrs. Norton said: "It ith tho thweet and affecting that every body ought to read it."

"Yes," said her mother, (Mrs. Kite,) "it does justice to the memory of an eminent and distinguished Patriot."

Some people talked of having the gentleman who fired the unlucky shot taken up for examination be-

fore a magistrate. But others said it was only an accident that could not be helped now. Mr. Norton was dead, and why persecute the unhappy living? The apology he made was so beautiful—so full of just thoughts and fine sentiments that it shewed the man's heart was good: why then disturb him?

CHAPTER LIII.

HULDAH was seized and bound—and, after a few days, sold to a trader who took her to Louisiana. She was sent to work in the cotton field with the other slaves, and toiled in the sunshine and in the storm. Her mind gradually lost its power, and the once high-spirited and noble woman sunk down nearly to the level of her associates. They, however, could laugh and sing and be gay. Her days and nights were always sad. A deep sorrow forever brooded over her with its raven wings—sorrow that knew no moment of relief—sadness that deepened into gloom and thick darkness.

The Sabbath morning came with its first pencilings of early dawn, and all was still as if the earth was listening to the morning song of angels, slowly floating unseen above it. The wind bore on its wings the fragrance of orange blossoms and odors from a thousand flowers. Myriads of birds sung sweetly in the trees, and all nature seemed rejoicing before God. But no sweet Sabbath bell invited Huldah to the sanctuary. No bloom of flowers, nor melody of birds, nor gladness of nature, lifted, for a moment, the load of sorrow from Huldah's broken heart. Years—weary, sad, and cheerless years, rolled slowly on—like the never-ending cycles of eternity, and still she toiled on and ever on, and lay down at night on her bundle of rags—too weary to rest—too sad for refreshing sleep.

She lingered one day behind the other slaves. Her weary form seemed feeble with premature old age, and was half bent to the earth, and her long hair, white as the cotton she was picking, lay upon her shoulders. She lingered yet more:

"Move on, old Huldah," said the overseer: Her pace quickened for an instant, as if the words gave her new strength, and then she flagged again: "Move on, old Huldah"—and as he said so, the thong of his whip lash fell heavily upon her shoulders. She sprang, with a shriek, into the air—staggered forward, and fell upon her face, and—Huldah's sacrifice was over.

CHAPTER LIV.

As Mr. Strong was walking down Broadway, New York, jostled by the crowd, he heard footsteps behind him, and some one laid a broad hand on his shoulder. He turned, and—

“How aire you, Squire? I’m mighty glad to see you,” said Tom Giles, as he seized his hand.

“Why, Giles, I am surprised and delighted to meet you here—and there’s the badger in the basket on your arm.”

“Yes, Squire, it’s here yet; but, poor thing, it’s never got over that crick in its neck; it’s crooked yet, and I’m afeard will be till it dies.”

They went to the hotel at which Mr. Strong put up, and Giles gave him an account of his wanderings.

“Squire, arter I left you in sich a hurry, near Chattanooga, I went down to Nashville, by the railroad, and then down the Cumberland river, to Smithland, and then to Paducah. I shewed the varmint at all these places, and went up the Ohio river to Cincinnati—there I fell in with a man that had a chicken cock that had horns. Me and him went in cohoot for a time, and arter a while I broke the partnership, and started out agin, on my own account. I went to Cleveland and to Buffalo, and to Albany, and then to New York. There I fell in with a man that had a marmont for show—it is a squirrel with a monkey’s head, or a monkey with a squirrel’s body, jist as you have a mind to call it.

Well, him and me went into partnership. He had a hand organ and ground the music out, and I showed the varmints. One day we were about ten miles back of New York, and he were playing the hand-organ and I were waitin' for people to come. We were back of a great garden with a high brick wall round, it and a small door about the middle of the wall. The door opened and two nice pretty little boys come out, one about six year old and the other about five, and they ran back and called a lady to the gate. She took a good look at me and walked down five or six steps and come up close to me. She stretched out her little white hand and said, "I believe this is my old neighbor, Mr. Giles."

I catch her hand and looked at her, but, says I, "I can't call your name."

"Ah, Mr. Giles, I see you have forgotten me."

"Yes, indeed, I has."

"Don't you remember Harriet Gilpin, Mr. Brandon's grand-daughter?"

"Yes," says I, and then I tuk another look at her.

"Come in, Mr. Giles;" and she tuk me and the man what was my partner into the house and gave us both a nice dinner.

She married that schoolmaster, Paul Hunter, Squire, and the little boys is her grand-children. That Mr. Hunter is a great man thar, Squire. If you would hear his neighbors talk about him you would think that he were most as great a man as Ginaler Jackson, and he's had high offices and is mighty rich, and they live in grand style, equal to my rich kin folks in Memphis. I axed her about her mother. She married that Englishman, Rashleigh,

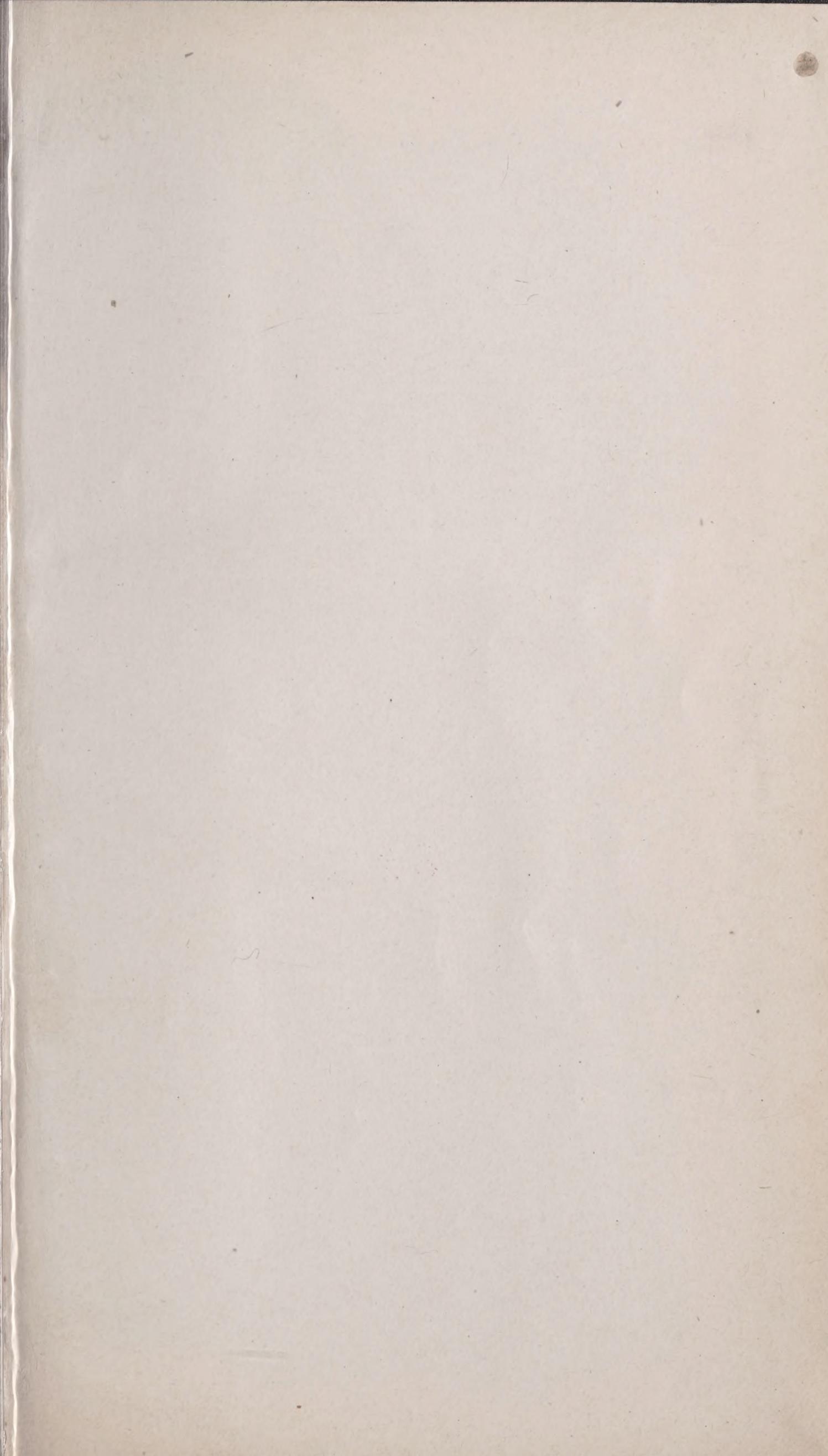
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and went to England and lived thar in grand style, and died only two or three year ago."

Giles returned soon afterward to his home in Arkansas. After he did so, Mr. Strong received a letter with the mysterious mark, "free to ~~Giles~~ Giles," which seemed afterward to have been erased and a postage stamp placed upon the letter. It was from Giles, who informed him that his neighbors, "for want of a better," as he modestly said, had elected him a member of the legislature, and that there was some talk of their getting up a petition to the President to have him appointed post master at Noble's post office, White county, State of Arkansas.

THE END.

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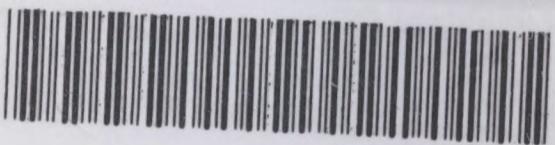


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